

NATURALISTIC ETHICAL THEORY

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**(A Critical Study in the light of G.E. Moore's Criticism
and certain Recent Developments in Ethical Theory)**

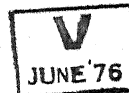
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C E R T I F I C A T E

The research work embodied in the thesis has been carried out under my supervision. The work is original and has not been submitted elsewhere for a degree.

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

The question which is central to the present inquiry is this: Can ethical predicates be analysed in terms of naturalistic or empirical predicates? By "ethical predicate" I mean such predicates as "good", "bad", "right", "wrong", "duty", "ought", etc. This list does not exhaust the whole set of ethical predicates. A certain linguistic expression may be used¹ ethically even when it does not include any one of these words. Take, for example, the sentence "It is time to return home". Apparently, this sentence does not include any typically ethical predicates like "bad", "wrong", etc. Nevertheless, it functions like an ethical predicate whenever the sentence is used in an ethical context;² for in ethical contexts, it will mean "It is time when you ought to return home".

By "naturalistic predicate" I mean those predicates which ascribe certain natural characteristics to things. These natural characteristics do not judge the value of the thing to which they are ascribed, nor do they prescribe certain guidelines for action in moral situations, unless they are combined with at least one ethical predicate. Such expressions as "red", "tall", "heavy", "wet", etc., are examples of naturalistic predicates.

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- 1) Cf. Stevenson, C.L., Ethics and Language, New Haven; Yale University Press, 1944; pp 256-257.
 - 2) I do not attempt to explicate the notion of "ethical context" in the present inquiry. I take it for granted that the expressions "ethical context", "moral situation", and the like are intelligible and so I am using them as they are used in language.

We may generalize: Any expression which itself is an ethical predicate or includes an ethical predicate, either explicitly or implicitly, is an ethical expression. Thus, "right" is an ethical expression in virtue of itself being an ethical predicate, "Keeping one's promises is right" is ethical explicitly because of the occurrence of an ethical predicate in it, while "Promises have to be kept" is an expression which is ethical implicitly. Similarly, any expression which itself is a naturalistic predicate or functions like one is a naturalistic expression. Thus, "red" is a naturalistic expression in virtue of itself being a naturalistic predicate, whereas "This book is red" is a naturalistic expression because of the non-occurrence of an ethical predicate in it.

Historically and in the philosophical works usually, ethical naturalism has been defined as that type of ethical theory which answers our question in the affirmative. The answer is that ethical predicates are analysable in terms of naturalistic predicates. Ethical naturalism has been conceived on these lines by many ethical thinkers right from G.E. Moore in the year 1903 to William K. Frankena in the year 1964. I propose to call this conception of ethical naturalism as 'Naturalism a la Moore', because it was G.E. Moore who, first of all, defined ethical naturalism in these terms.

3) Moore, G.E., Principia Ethica, Cambridge; At the University Press, 1903.

4) Frankena, William K., 'Ethics' in Philosophy (Eds. Chisholm, Feigl, Frankena, Passmore, Thompson); Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1964; pp 355-376.

5) Moore, G.E., Principia Ethica, Cambridge; At the University Press, 1903; p. 40.

An ethical theory which accepts (b) only, but rejects (a), may or may not be naturalistic depending upon the sort of logical relation which it may envisage between the justified ethical assertions and the justifying empirical assertions. However, such an ethical theory must be naturalistic if it asserts that the relation between the two types of assertions is the relation of deducibility, such that to say, for example, "x is pleasant" (empirical assertion) entails, or logically implies "x is good" (ethical assertion).

One may, however, hold the two theses (a) and (b) together. One may say that ethical assertions are to be justified wholly in terms of empirical assertions and that they themselves are empirical assertions. John Dewey, for example, asserts both (a) and (b) together. For him, value judgements are empirical generalizations, for they are propositions about valuations made in terms of their conditions and consequences, and therefore they are verifiable wholly by empirical means.⁷

The theses (a) and (b) may be held by naturalists a la Moore either (a) as a description of, or report on, how ethical expressions are in fact used and justified in our ordinary ethical discourse, or (2) they may be held as a recommendation or proposal on how ethical expressions ought to be analysed and justified if ethics is to be a science. John Dewey's naturalistic ethical theory, for example, is a proposal on how ethical expressions ought to be analysed and justified,⁸ while Westermarck's ethical naturalism is claimed to be a description of or report on how ethical expressions are in fact used and justified in our

7) Dewey, John, Theory of Valuation, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press; 1939; p 20.

8) Dewey, John, Theory of Valuation, Chicago; 1939.

9) Westermarck. E.. Ethical Relativity, New York; Harcourt, Brace

ordinary ethical discourse.

Within naturalism a la Moore, ethical theories may differ not only in matters of detail but on such important aspects of ethics as the analysis of ethical expressions, the account of action-guiding function of ethical judgements, and the like. But that which distinguishes these ethical theories as naturalistic (indeed, naturalistic a la Moore) is their general thesis (a) or (b) with central emphasis on the thesis that ethical judgements are, without exception, to be justified by some kind of empirical inquiry. In a sentence, they all hold that ethics is an empirical inquiry, or that in ethics the ultimate evidence is empirical.

Not all naturalists, however, can be comprehended under Moore's conception of ethical naturalism; and there are many ethical theories which Moore characterized to be naturalistic but which, on a critical examination of their logical structure and Moore's arguments intended to show them to be naturalistic, according to me, fall outside Moore's conception of ethical naturalism. I shall also show in my analysis of the ethical theories of Mill, Spencer, Perry, and Dewey, that Moore's conception of naturalism tends to make ethics impossible.¹⁰

My findings, therefore, suggest me either to give up the expression "ethical naturalism" as inadequate and misleading for purposes of describing those ethical theories which are empirically biased, and in particular, to give up Moore's conception of ethical naturalism as an unsatisfactory conception,

10) I do not give reasons for this assertion right here. The reasons have been worked out throughout the present inquiry and they are stated in the concluding chapter.

or else to treat his conception at best to be a species of ethical naturalism and to describe naturalism in a way in which it is in conformity with the actual practice of ethical thinkers called naturalists. I have accepted the second alternative. The new conception of ethical naturalism is arrived at as a result of a sympathetic study of the actual ethical thinking of four representative ethical philosophers - Mill, Spencer, Perry, and Dewey - and it is briefly stated in the conclusion.

Since Moore's conception of ethical naturalism has been taken for granted in the history of ethical theory since 1903, I propose to take this conception as the starting-point of my inquiry. For, I believe that (1) most critics of naturalism, for example, Brandt, Hare, Toulmin, Taylor, and some other analysts, have before their minds Moore's model of naturalism and they take this model to be the whole of ethical naturalism (i.e., ethical naturalism per se as distinguished from ethical naturalism a la Moore). Not only this but also (2) those¹¹ ethical thinkers who propose several reconstructions of ethical naturalism (e.g., Perry, and Dewey) they also have before their minds Moore's conception of naturalism, such that they seek to reconstruct naturalistic ethical theory on the same model.

Ethical naturalism is a certain kind of theory about the meaning and justification of ethical judgements. "An ethical theory is naturalistic if and only if it holds that moral judgements are equivalent in meaning to statements of¹² sociological or linguistic non-moral fact".

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- 11) For some more examples of reconstructions of ethical naturalism a la Moore, see 1) Lepley, Ray (Ed.); Value: A Cooperative Inquiry, New York; Columbia University Press, 1949; 2) Lepley, Ray (Ed.); The Language of Value, New York, 1957.
 12) Hare, R.M., in the Encyclopaedia of Western Philosophers and Philosophies, p 139.

Ethical naturalism may be distinguished from metaphysical naturalism which is a certain kind of world-view or a theory in ontology. The distinction between the two may be expressed by saying that while metaphysical naturalism is inconsistent with supernaturalism, ethical naturalism may be consistent with metaphysical naturalism, such that certain metaphysical ethical theories may be included¹³ as subspecies of the class of ethical naturalism. It is for this reason that Moore discusses Kant's ethical theory as one of those theories which commit the naturalistic fallacy.

Ethical naturalism may be discussed epistemologically as an answer to the question, 'How do we know values?' Or, it may be discussed logically as an answer to the question, 'What do we mean when we say that a certain object is good, a certain action is right, or a certain action ought to be done?' 'How do we justify or establish ethical judgements and ethical principles?' is a logical question. An ethical naturalist, epistemologically, is at the same time, a naturalist in metaphysics also, unless he holds that we can know supernatural things empirically. A metaphysical naturalist, on the other hand, need not be a naturalist in ethical theory; for he may affirm that value and obligation are natural phenomena, and yet deny that they are known empirically. G.E. Moore, for instance, is a naturalist in metaphysics, while a nonnaturalist intuitionist and an arch enemy of naturalism in ethics.

The approach in the present inquiry is logical. We are concerned with the meaning and justification of ethical expressions. We ask questions like, 'Can we analyse ethical expressions in

13) Moore, G.E., Principia Ethica, Cambridge: At the University Press, 1903; p. 39.

in terms of naturalistic or empirical expressions?' 'What is the function and logical status of expressions like "Such and such action is good or right", "Such and such action is a duty or ought to be done?", etc. We also explore possible relations between ethical expressions and naturalistic expressions, asking questions like, 'How do we justify ethical expressions?' 'Do we justify or establish or verify them by means of other ethical expressions, or naturalistic expressions, or by a conjunction of both ethical and naturalistic expressions?' These are logical questions, and they show that we study ethical naturalism from the logical point of view.

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CHAPTER 1

G. E. MOORE AND ETHICAL NATURALISM

I propose to discuss in this chapter G.E. Moore's view of ethical naturalism. My plan is as follows: First I shall state what Moore means when he says that a certain ethical theory is naturalistic. Secondly, I shall discuss his thesis that ethical naturalism is inconsistent with the possibility of any Ethics whatever.¹ Finally, I shall summarise my argument.

Throughout the discussion, we shall bear in mind that Moore discussed ethical naturalism only to find it unsatisfactory as an ethical theory. He claimed himself to be an intuitionist. His intuitionism, however, is distinguished from the intuitionism proper in two important respects: One, he denies that the ethical propositions which are answers to the question, 'What kind of action ought we to perform?' are incapable of proof or disproof by any inquiry into the results of actions;² but he affirms that the ethical propositions which are answers to the question, 'What kind of things ought to exist for their own sake?'³ are intuitions.⁴ He says:

1) Moore, G.E., Principia Ethica, Cambridge: At the University Press, 1903; p 40.

2) Ibid, p. x.

3) Ibid, p. viii.

4) Ibid, p. x.

"any answer to it i.e., the question, 'What things are good as means?' or 'What kind of actions ought we to perform?' is capable of proof or disproof - that, indeed, so many different considerations are relevant to its truth or falsehood, as to make the attainment of probability very difficult, and the attainment of certainty impossible. Nevertheless the kind of evidence, which is both necessary and alone relevant to such proof and disproof, is capable of exact definition. Such evidence must contain propositions of two kinds and of two kinds only; it must consist, in the first place, of truths with regard to the results of the action in question - of causal truths - but it must also contain ethical truths of our first or self-evident class. Many truths of both kinds are necessary to the proof that any action ought to be done; and any other kind of evidence is wholly irrelevant." 5

"for answers to the first question i.e., the question, 'What kind of things ought to exist for their own sake?' or 'What things are good in themselves?' no relevant evidence whatever can be adduced; from no other truth, except themselves alone, can it be inferred that they are either true or false". 6

Second, Moore does not use the word 'intuition' as equivalent in meaning to some sort of 'cognition', but he stipulates that the word be used in the sense in which it means 'incapable of proof'. He says;

"Again, I would wish it observed that, when I call such propositions i.e., propositions which are answers to the question, 'What kind of things ought to exist for their own sake?' 'Intuitions', I mean merely to assert that they are incapable of proof; I imply nothing whatever as to the manner or origin of our cognitions of them." 7

We shall also bear in mind that Moore is concerned with ethical methodology. According to him, ethical naturalism is "a particular method of approaching Ethics". He says;

5) Ibid, pp viii-ix.

6) Ibid, p viii.

7) Ibid, p x

"I have thus appropriated the name Naturalism to a particular method of approaching Ethics - a method which, strictly understood, is inconsistent with the possibility of any Ethics whatever." 8

What does the method of Naturalism consist in? It consists in substituting for 'good' some natural property, or 'defining' good in terms of some natural property, or meaning by 'good' some natural property.

"This method consists in substituting for 'good' some one property of a natural object or of a collection of natural objects; and in thus replacing Ethics by some one of the natural sciences." 9

To illustrate the naturalistic method, let us agree that (1) ethical properties are different from natural properties; and also that (2) 'good' denotes an ethical property, while 'pleasure', for example, denotes a natural property. The naturalistic method consists in saying that (3) Pleasure is good, where (3) must be taken to be a statement of the meaning or definition of 'good' in terms of 'pleasure', such that wherever 'good' occurs we may substitute 'pleasure' for 'good'. Thus, according to Moore, the naturalistic method analyses the meaning of 'good' or defines 'good' in terms of a natural term like 'pleasure', such that the assertion 'Pleasure is good' and the assertion 'Pleasure is pleasure' turn out to be logically equivalent.

Now, Moore claims that the naturalistic method is inconsistent with the possibility of any Ethics whatever; it replaces Ethics by some one of the natural or social sciences, such that "its conclusions could be all established by means of empirical observation and induction".¹⁰

8) Ibid, p 40.

9) Ibid, p 40.

10) Ibid, p 39.

This claim is not intended to exclude the use of empirical observation and induction from any ethical inquiry. Moore explicitly states in discussing the truth and falsity of judgements of duty that they must include in evidence thereof two kinds of truths - (a) ethical truths and (b) causal truths.¹¹ Causal truths involve empirical observation and induction. As causal truths alone are not sufficient to prove judgements of duty to be true or false, it follows that empirical method alone is not sufficient to prove truth or falsity of judgements of duty. Further, he denies the relevance of any evidence whatever for showing truth and falsity of judgements of intrinsic value. According to him, such judgements are intuitions in the sense that they are incapable of proof or disproof.¹² He thus, clearly, assigns a limited but definite role to the scientific method in ethical inquiry, particularly, ethical reasoning.

Let us consider Moore's claim that the naturalistic method is inconsistent with the possibility of any Ethics whatever. To support this claim, he must show that what he means by the 'naturalistic method' and also what he means by 'Ethics'. It is only after having done this that he can show that the naturalistic method is inconsistent with the possibility of all Ethics.

We have already seen what Moore means by the 'naturalistic method' or 'ethical naturalism'. According to him, the method consists in defining 'good' in terms of some natural property.¹³

11) Ibid, pp. ix; 21-27; and Chapter V.

12) Ibid, p. x.

13) Ibid, p. 40.

We shall say more about the method when we discuss the logic of the naturalistic fallacy. For the present, we propose to discuss Moore's conception of Ethics, and the various arguments he puts forward in support of it.

Moore defines the province of Ethics "as the whole truth about that which is at the same time common to all such

i.e., ethical judgements and peculiar to them".¹⁴ That which is common and peculiar to all ethical judgements is denoted by the ethical predicate 'good'. What the ethical predicate 'good' denotes is a simple object of thought, and it is this simple object of thought which distinguishes Ethics in being its peculiar and distinctive subject-matter.

"That which is meant by 'good' is, in fact, except its converse 'bad', the only simple object of thought which is peculiar to Ethics".¹⁵

This simple object of thought which is denoted by the ethical predicate 'good' is neither analysable nor definable; but if Ethics is to be defined and distinguished from other studies it must be defined by reference to it. Thus he says;

"Our first conclusion as to the subject-matter of Ethics is, then, that there is a simple, indefinable, unanalysable object of thought by reference to which it must be defined".¹⁶

All ethical judgements involve a reference to it i.e., to that which is denoted by the ethical predicate 'good' , and "they are expressions of ethical judgements solely because they do so refer".¹⁷

Why does Moore think that the ethical predicate 'good' is a simple notion? Someone may put up a counter claim that 'good' is not a simple notion. How will Moore, then, defend

14) Ibid, p 1.

15) Ibid, p 5.

16) Ibid, p 21.

17) Ibid, p 21.

his position? In fact, he has given no conclusive reasons for the assertion that good is a simple notion. Perhaps no reasons whatever can be given for this assertion. All that he says in support of it is that 'good' belongs to the class of those terms which "are simply something which you think of or perceive, and to any one who cannot think of or perceive them, you can never, by any definition, make their nature known".¹⁸ But, this leads us nowhere. Moore cannot defend his thesis that good is a simple notion by saying only that we know it intuitively. For the concept of intuition is not analysable in any intelligible terms. Following Stevenson, I will only say that intuition is no more than one of those 'elaborately sophisticated fictions'¹⁹ which philosophers like Moore have built up in the name of common-sense. Hence, I take Moore's thesis that the ethical predicate 'good' is a simple notion to be based on his inspection; He has not given any good reasons for it.

The unanalysability of 'good' is a consequence of its simplicity. The notion of 'good' is simple; therefore, it is not analysable. To analyse a concept, according to Moore, is to break up the concept into its constituent parts. This sort of analysis, however, is possible only in the case of complex notions which are all composed of parts. The

18) Ibid, p. 7.

19) Schilpp, P., (Ed.), The Philosophy of G.E. Moore, Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1942, p. 89.

concept of 'the good', for example, is a complex concept; it is constituted of two parts; the concept of 'good' and the concept of 'thing'. Therefore, this concept is analysable in terms of 'good' and 'thing'. But, it is impossible to analyse the concept of 'good', which is a simple concept.

The thesis (a) that the ethical predicate 'good' is unanalysable is not tenable for two reasons: One, this thesis, apparently, is based on, and derived from, the thesis (b) that 'good' is a simple notion. We have seen that the thesis (b) is Moore's assertion unsupported by good reasons. Some one else's inspection may tell him the other way around and hence he may say that 'good' is not a simple notion. Moore, in that case, cannot defend his thesis. As the thesis (b) is indefensible, its consequence the thesis (a) also cannot be defended.

Two, the second reason for saying that the thesis (a) is not tenable derives from Moore's faulty conception of analysis. It is faulty because it is too restrictive. His conception of analysis is similar to the chemist's conception of analysis. In chemistry, one may analyse a compound by breaking it up into its simple constituent parts. And, this conception may be adequate in the case of those concepts which are analysable in terms of their constituent concepts. This conception of analysis, however, fails us when we are faced with the question of analysing simple concepts. The chemist's method is not adequate to the analysis of simple concepts, or even to the ~~and~~ analysis of ~~many other~~ many other concepts which may not be simple. For their

analysis, we may adopt a different method. We may analyse them by distinguishing and segregating them from other concepts. I claim therefore, that even if the ethical predicate 'good' may be simple notion, it is not one of those predicates which are unanalysable.

Let us now consider Moore's claim that the ethical predicate 'good' is indefinable. He says:

"If I am asked 'What is good?' my answer is that good is good, and that is the end of the matter. Or if I am asked 'How is good to be defined?' my answer is that it cannot be defined, and this is all I have to say about it. But disappointing as these answers may appear, they are of the very last importance. To readers who are familiar with philosophic terminology, I can express their importance by saying that they amount to this: That propositions about the good are all of them synthetic and never analytic; and that is plainly no trivial matter". 20

It is important to explicate the sense in which Moore is ~~now~~ denying that the ethical predicate 'good' ^{is} definable. (a) He is not talking of 'the arbitrary verbal definition', i.e., stipulative definition, as in the expression, " 'When I say 'horse', you are to understand that I am talking about a hoofed quadruped of the genus Equus' ". 21 (2) Nor is he talking of 'the verbal definition proper', i.e., reportive definition, as in the expression, " 'When most English people say 'horse', they mean a hoofed quadruped of the genus Equus' ". 22 Moore is not saying that 'good' is indefinable in the sense of either (1) or (2).

When Moore says that 'good' is indefinable, (3) he is talking of real, analytic, definition which gives an analysis

20) Moore, G.E., Principia Ethica, C.U.P., Cambridge, 1903; pp 6-7.

21) Ibid, p 8.

22) Ibid, p 8.

of the concept defined (of course, on the chemist's model of analysis). He says:

"When we define, for example, the concept 'horse' we may mean that a certain object, which we all of us know, is composed in a certain manner, that it has four legs, a head, a heart, a liver, etc., etc., all of them arranged in definite relations to one another. It is in this sense that I deny good to be definable. I say that it is not composed of any parts, which we can substitute for it in our minds when we are thinking of it".²³

Again,

"there is nothing whatsoever which we could so substitute for good; and that is what I mean, when I say that good is indefinable".²⁴

Moore regards the sense (3) of 'definition' to be the most important sense.²⁵ Let us see how Moore reasons out his thesis that 'good' is indefinable. His reasoning is exhibited in the following passage of the Principia:

"The most important sense of 'definition' is that in which a definition states what are the parts which invariably compose a certain whole; and in this sense 'good' has no definition because it is simple and has no parts. It is one of those innumerable objects of thought which are themselves incapable of definition, because they are the ultimate terms by reference to which whatever is capable of definition must be defined. ... There is, therefore, no intrinsic difficulty in the contention that 'good' denotes a simple and indefinable quality".²⁶

Moore's reason for the indefinability thesis is straightforward; The ethical predicate 'good' denotes a simple notion. A simple notion, because it has no parts, is not analysable. Any notion which is not analysable (that is, breakable into its constituent parts) is not definable also. For, according to Moore, the concept of definability is no different from the concept of analysability, such that to say that a concept is unanalysable is so ipso to say that it is indefinable.

23) Ibid, p. 8.

24) Ibid, p. 8.

25) Ibid, p. 9.

26) Ibid, pp. 9-10.

I have argued so far that Moore's two theses, namely, (1) that good is a simple notion, and (2) that it is unanalysable, are not defensible. His third thesis is (3) that good is indefinable. This thesis as I have shown above, is not different (by definition) from the thesis (2). Even if it were different from (2), it is made to hang on (1) and (2), both of which are indefensible. It follows that (3) cannot be supported by (1) and (2).

Moreover, there are difficulties in Moore's theory of definition. According to him, "a definition states what are the parts which invariably compose a certain whole".²⁷ It is in this sense that 'horse' is definable, whereas 'good' is not definable. Moore claims that this is the most important sense of 'definition'. However, he does not give any reasons why he thinks that this is the most important sense of 'definition'. This, again, seems to be his decision to use 'definition' in a particular way and to call this use to be the most important use of the word.

Secondly, Moore conceives the function of definition in a queer way. I will illustrate his conception by taking the ethical predicate 'good' as my example. He seems to think that to define that which is denoted by 'good' is to substitute for that something else. And, this, he rightly claims, cannot be done; for (he quotes from Bishop Butler his motto) "Everything is what it is, and not another thing". I do not question the law of identity. I only wish to point out that this is not what Moore says

27) Ibid, p. 9.

we do when we give a definition. We do not define the denotatum of 'good'; we only define the linguistic expression 'good' in terms of other equivalent linguistic expressions, such that the two expressions are mutually interchangeable. Thus, as a result of defining E_1 in terms of E_2 , we can substitute E_2 wherever E_1 occurs, whenever need be, if and only if both E_1 and E_2 say the same thing. We do not define one expression in terms of another where the two expressions say different things.

Moore's tacit assumption is that in saying that good is indefinable what he is asserting is that a real definition of 'good' is not possible. By a real definition he means analysis of that which the predicate 'good' denotes. This raises an important question: What do we define? Do we define the use of linguistic expressions or the things denoted by linguistic expressions? The answer depends on how one looks at things. We can do no better than state our position: Definition is a device which is used to specify the meaning of a certain word, symbol, or expression. There may be other devices for specification of meaning; but definition is the most frequently used one. In defining an expression, we state the conditions which are both necessary and sufficient for the application of the expression defined. This use of 'definition' seems to be the most important use, because of its being the most frequently mentioned for purposes of specification of meaning.²⁸ The ethical predicate

28) Cf. Kaplan, Abraham, The Conduct of Inquiry, Chandler Publishing Company, San Francisco, California, 1964; pp 71-78. I acknowledge my indebtedness to Prof. Kaplan.

'good' in this sense is definable; for it is possible to state explicitly the conditions which are both necessary and sufficient for its application. We may do this in two ways; One, by stipulating, and two, by reporting on, the conditions of its use. The second alternative might prove to be extremely complicated, but it is not impossible. Further, the second alternative, in fact, has been adopted by ethicists like Hare²⁹, Toulmin³⁰, Stevenson³¹, Baier³², and Prasad³³.

It is clear that Moore's theory of definition, essentially, is a theory of analysis, and that as a theory of definition, it misses the point, namely, that what we define is the use of linguistic expressions, and that we do not define that which a linguistic expression might denote. I have indicated an alternative theory of definition on which it is possible to define the ethical predicate 'good' in the sense of specifying its meaning by stating the conditions which are both necessary and sufficient for the application of the expression.

I shall now proceed to consider another of Moore's arguments for the thesis that " 'good' denotes something simple and indefinable".³⁴ The argument is a variant of reductio ad absurdum. It proceeds as follows: Suppose

29) Hare, R.M., The Language of Morals, O.U.P. (1952).

30) Toulmin, Stephen, An Examination of the Place of Reason in Ethics, CUP (1950).

31) Stevenson, C.L., Ethics and Language, Yale University Press (1944).

32) Prasad, Rajendra, The Concept of Good, to be published.

32) Baier, Kurt, The Moral Point of View, Cornell University Press (1968).

34) Moore, G.E., Principia Ethica, C.U.P. (1903); p. 15.

'good' does not denote something simple and indefinable. Then, there are only two alternatives; One: that good is a complex and we are not sure of the correct analysis of it; or two: that good means nothing and there is no such subject as Ethics. Both these alternatives, however, are false. Therefore, the thesis that 'good' denotes something simple and indefinable is established. He says:

"In fact, if it is not the case that 'good' denotes something simple and indefinable, only two alternatives are possible; either it is a complex, a given whole, about the correct analysis of which there may be disagreement; or else it means nothing at all, and there is no subject as Ethics."³⁵

Again,

"There are, in fact, only two serious alternatives to be considered, in order to establish the conclusion that 'good' does denote a simple and indefinable notion. It might possibly denote a complex, as 'horse' does; or it might have no meaning at all. Neither of these possibilities has, however, been clearly conceived and seriously maintained, as such, by those who presume to define good; and both may be dismissed by a simple appeal to facts".³⁶

Moore rejects the first alternative, viz., that good is a complex about the correct analysis of which there may be disagreement, "by considerations of the fact that, whatever definition be offered, it may be always asked, with significance, of the complex so defined, whether it is itself good".³⁷ This is what has been called Moore's Open Question Argument. Take any definition of 'good', for instance, the definition; to be good means to be pleasant, or 'good'=df. 'pleasant'. Given this definition, wherever

35) Ibid, p. 15.

36) Ibid, p. 15.

37) Ibid, p. 15.

we use 'good' we may substitute 'pleasant' for 'good', such that to say that 'x is good' is to say that 'x is pleasant'. This definition of 'good', however, is unsatisfactory: It says that both 'good' and 'pleasant' denote the same thing which in fact is not the case. For, in the case of the given definition of good in terms of pleasant it can always be significantly asked: Is x which is pleasant good? If the given definition were satisfactory - in which the definiendum and the definiens say the same thing - then this sort of question cannot be asked, as it cannot be asked in the case, for example, where 'four' is defined as equivalent to 'two added to two'.

The open question argument, however, does not do the job which Moore desires it to do. It does not show that good is not complex, but simple and indefinable. What it may, at best, show is that good is different from pleasant but nothing else. To say (a) that good is different from pleasant is not the same thing as saying (b) that good is not complex but simple and indefinable. Nor does (a) imply or even suggest (b). For, this reason, I consider Moore's open question argument to be inconclusive.

His second argument to establish (1) fares no better. The argument is that "any one can easily convince himself by inspection that the predicate of this proposition [viz., That we should desire to desire A is good] - 'good' - is positively different from the notion of 'desiring to desire' which enters into its subject; 'That we should desire to desire A is good' is not merely equivalent to 'That A should

be good is good' ".³⁸ Clearly, the argument can show only that the notion of good is different from the notion of desiring to desire; but it does not show that good is a simple and therefore indefinable notion.

The second alternative which Moore considers is that good has no meaning whatsoever. To reject this alternative, he gives two arguments: One from intuitive inspection, and the other from common-sense. He says:

- a) "Whoever will attentively consider with himself what is actually before his mind when he asks the question 'Is pleasure (or whatever it may be) after all good?' can easily satisfy himself that he is not merely wondering whether pleasure is pleasant. And, if he will try this experiment with each suggested definition in succession, he may become expert enough to recognize that in every case he has before his mind a unique object, with regard to the connection of which with any other object, a distinct question may be asked."³⁹

Again,

- b) "Every one does in fact understand the question 'Is this good?' ... It has a distinct meaning for him, even though he may not recognize in what respect it is distinct."⁴⁰

Both the arguments (a) and (b), I agree, do show that good has a meaning. The (a) may also show that good is different from pleasure. Moore, however, seems to draw more by way of the conclusion than the evidence of intuitive inspection or of common-sense can allow him to draw. For, the conclusion that he draws is that good is different from pleasure and also that good is a unique object. Even if it were granted that the conclusion that good is a unique object can be borne out, it can scarcely be borne out that good is simple and indefinable, the conclusion he is so anxious to establish.

³⁸) Ibid, p 16.

³⁹) Ibid, p 16.

⁴⁰) Ibid, pp 16-17.

So far I have shown that Moore's thesis that the ethical predicate 'good' is a simple, unanalyzable, and indefinable notion does not have a sound foundation. The various arguments which Moore has given in support of it, with the one exception of the naturalistic fallacy argument which I shall examine presently, are not conclusive. They show at best that the ethical predicate 'good' is different from the predicates like 'pleasant' and 'red', but they do not show that 'good' is a simple, unanalyzable, and indefinable notion.

The Naturalistic Fallacy Argument:

The naturalistic fallacy argument is designed to show the same thesis that the ethical predicate 'good' denotes a simple, unanalyzable and indefinable object of thought. The logical structure of the argument is as follows:-

- a) If 'good' were defined as something else (as it has very commonly been done), that is, if the naturalistic fallacy were committed, then ethical principles become either tautologies or statements about the meaning of the word 'good', that is, reports on usage.
- b) But, ethical principles are neither tautologies nor reports on usage; they are synthetic and ethical, never analytic or semantical propositions.
- c) Therefore, 'good' is indefinable as something else.
- d) It follows from (c) that 'good' is unanalyzable.
- e) Hence, it follows from (d) that 'good' is a simple notion.

A few comments are immediately called for: One, I have shown earlier that, according to Moore, to say that a notion is indefinable is to say that it is unanalysable; and conversely also, to say that a notion is unanalysable is to say that it is indefinable. Hence, (c) and (d) above say virtually the same thing.

Two, the passage from (c) or (d) to (e) is logical, not factual, such that to say that x is indefinable or x is unanalysable is to say that x is simple.

Three, there is a difficulty about Moore's use of the word 'indefinable' in (c) above. Ordinarily, the word means 'cannot be defined' such that when it occurs in the sentence "Good is indefinable &c." the sentence, on the face of it, is understood to mean "Good cannot be defined" or "It is impossible to define good". Following Moore, however, the passage from (a) and (b) to (c) does not seem to bear out this meaning of 'indefinable'. For (a), (b), and (c) when read as integral parts of the same argument may mean:-

- a') If you defined 'good' as something else (that is, if you committed the naturalistic fallacy), then you reduce ethical principles either to tautologies or to reports on usage.
- b') But, ethical principles are neither tautologies nor reports on usage; (alternatively, ethical principles ought not to be reduced either to tautologies or to reports on usage).
- c') Therefore, you ~~one~~ ought not to define good as something else (that is, one ought not to commit the naturalistic fallacy).

- d') It follows from (c') that 'good' ought not to be analysed in terms of some other notion.
- e') Hence, it follows from (d') that 'good' ought to be considered to be a simple notion.

On this analysis, Moore's thesis that 'good' is indefinable &c., turns out to be not a report on facts but a proposal that 'good' ought to be treated as a simple, unanalysable, and indefinable notion.

In the foregoing analysis, I have assumed that the naturalistic fallacy consists in defining 'good' as something else. I propose to show in the next section that this really is the case, that according to Moore, the naturalistic fallacy consists in defining 'good' as something else.

What does the naturalistic fallacy consist in? Apparently, Moore has not given just one answer to this question.⁴¹

We may note at least six of them:-

- a) "It may be true that all things which are good are also something else And it is a fact, that Ethics aims at discovering what are those other properties belonging to all things which are good. But far too many philosophers have thought that when they named those other properties they were actually defining good; that these properties, in fact, were simply not 'other', but absolutely and entirely the same with goodness. This view I propose to call the 'naturalistic fallacy' ... "⁴²
- b1) "And if anybody tried to define pleasure for us as being any other natural object; if anybody were to say, for instance, that pleasure means the sensation

41) For evidence, see among others,

- 1) Frankena, W.K., 'The Naturalistic Fallacy', Mind, 48 (1939).
- 2) Nakhnikian, George, 'On the Naturalistic Fallacy' in Morality and the Language of Conduct (Eds; Hector-Neri Castaneda and George Nakhnikian), Wayne State University Press, Detroit-2, Michigan, 1965; pp 145-158.
- 3) Gauthier, D.p., 'Moore's Naturalistic Fallacy', Amer. Phil. Qty., Vol 4, No. 4 (October 1967).

of red, and were to proceed to deduce from that that pleasure is a colour, we should be entitled to laugh at him and to distrust his future statements about pleasure. Well, that would be the same fallacy which I have called the naturalistic fallacy..."⁴³

bi1) "If I were to imagine that when I said 'I am pleased', I meant that I was exactly the same thing as 'pleased', I should not indeed call that a naturalistic fallacy, although it would be the same fallacy as I have called naturalistic with reference to Ethics. The reason of this is obvious enough. When a man confuses two natural objects with one another, defining the one by the other, if for instance, he confuses himself, who is one natural object, with 'pleased' or with 'pleasure' which are others, then there is no reason to call the fallacy naturalistic."⁴⁴

bi1i) "But if he confuses 'good', which is not in the same sense a natural object, with any natural object whatever, then there is a reason for calling that a naturalistic fallacy."⁴⁵

c) "This [i.e., naturalistic] method consists in substituting for 'good' some one property of a natural object or of a collection of natural objects; and in thus replacing Ethics by some one of the natural sciences".⁴⁶

d) "... the naturalistic fallacy - the fallacy which consists in identifying the simple notion which we mean by 'good' with some other notion."⁴⁷

What these quotations from (a) to (d) say, may be reformulated as follows:-

a) Let $\{P_1, P_2, \dots, P_n\}$ be a set of properties where $P_j \neq P_k$. Now, to define P_1 in terms of P_j (which is the same thing as saying that $P_1 = P_j$) is to commit the naturalistic fallacy.

42) Moore, G.E., Principia Ethica, C.U.P. (1903); p 10.

43) Ibid, p 13.

44) Ibid, p 13.

45) Ibid, p 13.

46) Ibid, p 40.

47) Ibid, p 58.

- a') To define 'good' by naming some property other than 'good' and thus (in effect) saying that 'good' and the property other than good are identical is to commit the naturalistic fallacy.
- bi) To define 'pleasure', for example, which is a natural object by some other natural object is to commit the naturalistic fallacy.
- bii) To confuse any two natural objects (thus, in effect, saying that they are identical with one another), and then to define one by the other is not the naturalistic fallacy.
- biil) To confuse 'good' which is not a natural object with any natural object, (thus, in effect, saying that the two are identical with one another), and then to define 'good' in terms of the natural object is to commit the naturalistic fallacy.
- c) To substitute for 'good' some property of a natural object is to commit the naturalistic fallacy.
- d) To identify the simple notion denoted by 'good' with some other notion is to commit the naturalistic fallacy.

In Moore, what is defined are the denotata of linguistic expressions in terms of their constituent parts, and not the use of linguistic expressions themselves. Also, 'to define X in terms of Y ' means 'to substitute Y for X in all occurrences of X , where Y is an analysis of X in terms of its constituent parts (call them x_1, x_2, \dots, x_m). Henceforth I shall call Moore's this theory of definition the 'Ontological Theory of Definition'.

We immediately eliminate from our discussion (b1) and (b11), because they contradict each other. (b111) and (c) virtually say the same thing:

- e) To define 'good' which is not a natural property of some natural object in terms of some natural property of a natural object is to commit the naturalistic fallacy.

We eliminate from our discussion (a) also, because it is more generalized than Moore would allow it to be. There remain now (a) and (d). Both these, however, do not make very different assertions, considering that, for Moore, 'good' is a simple notion, and that he holds the ontological theory of definition. The assertion which (a) and (d) make is:

- f) To define 'good' in terms of any other notion is to commit the naturalistic fallacy.

Let me try to elucidate (e): It has two parts:-

- ei) 'Good' is not a natural property of some natural object. eii) To define 'good' in terms of some natural property of a natural object is to commit the naturalistic fallacy. Consider (ei): 'Good' is not a natural property of some natural object. Moore finds no difficulty in saying which objects are natural objects. An object is said to be a natural object if it exists in time; an object is not a natural object if it does not exist in time.⁴⁸ The question, however, of distinguishing natural from nonnatural properties of natural objects is difficult to answer. For,

48) Ibid, pp 40-41.

Moore holds that 'good' is a property of certain natural objects, and yet it itself is not a natural property.⁴⁹ In the Principia, he formulates three tests for saying which property is a natural property and which property is not a natural property. These tests are;- a) Natural properties exist in time.⁵⁰ b) "They i.e., natural properties are in fact rather parts of which the natural object is made up than mere predicates which attach to it".⁵¹ c) Natural properties are substantial and give to the natural object all the substance that it has.⁵² He endeavoured to elucidate these criteria further when he suggested that natural properties may be descriptive of the intrinsic nature of the natural object of which they are predicated such that if one could emmerate all the natural properties of a given object, one would have given a complete description of it, and would not need to mention any predicates of value it possessed.⁵³

These criteria came under heavy attack from Moore's critics.⁵⁴ Later, he even asked himself the question whether 'good' was the name of a quality.⁵⁵ In 1942, he admitted that his criteria of saying which properties of a natural object are natural properties were all unsatisfactory.⁵⁶

49) Ibid, p 41.

50) Ibid, p 41.

51) Ibid, p 41.

52) Ibid, p 41.

53) Moore, G.E., 'The Conception of Intrinsic Value' in his Philosophical Studies, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., London, 1922; pp 263-275; p 274.

54) Moore, G.E., 'A Reply to My Critics' in The Philosophy of G.E. Moore (Ed. Schilp, P.); Section 3, Meaning of 'natural', pp 581-592.

Many contemporary ethical thinkers⁵⁷ are of the opinion that the distinction between natural and nonnatural properties of natural objects cannot be drawn satisfactorily; for the attempt to draw the distinction involves the misconception that 'good' is a property-word.⁵⁸ My conclusion, therefore, is that Moore has not been able to maintain the thesis (ei) that 'good' is not a natural property of some natural object. I may remark, however, that the concept of 'nonnatural property of natural object' is not explainable in any intelligible way, such that the assertion that there exist nonnatural properties of natural objects does not seem to make sense.

55) Moore, G.E., 'Is Goodness a Quality?' in his Philosophical Papers, Collier Books, New York.

56) Moore, G.E., 'A Reply to My Critics' in The Philosophy of G.E. Moore, Ed. P. Schilpp, Evanston and Chicago, 1942.

57) See for instance Toulmin, Stephen, An Examination of the Place of Reason in Ethics, Cambridge; At the University Press, 1950; pp 25-28.

58) Prasad, Rājendra, 'Evaluative, Factual, and Referring Expressions', The Presidential Address to the History of Philosophy Section, Indian Philosophical Congress, 41st Session, December 1967; published in the Visva-Bharati Journal of Philosophy, Vol. V, No 1, August 1968; pp 72-82; pp 79-80. Prasad, however, presents a different view of the situation. He holds that value words refer to properties, but he qualifies his view by saying that this is not the only or the main purpose of their use. He explicates the difference between value-expressions and factual expressions, not in terms of their referring use, but in terms of the difference of the purposes for which they are used.

We leave (e11) intact. We now have to consider which of the two remaining answers (e11) and (f) defines Moore's conception of naturalistic fallacy. Let us recapitulate the two alternatives:-

(e11): It states that to define 'good' in terms of some natural property of a natural object is to commit the naturalistic fallacy.

(f) : It states that to define 'good' in terms of any other notion is to commit the naturalistic fallacy.

Clearly, (e11) is a special case of (f). That (f) has been the guiding principle of Moore's analysis of 'good', there is no doubt about it. We may go a step still further and say that (f) derives from Moore's motto (taken from Bishop Butler); Everything is what it is and not another thing. Finally, keeping in view his ontological theory of definition where 'definition' means substituting one object for another object which is different from the first, and also his thesis of the absolute simplicity of 'good', Moore must call any definition of 'good', whether that definition is in terms of natural predicates or other than natural predicates, an instance of the naturalistic fallacy. My view, therefore, is that, according to Moore, the naturalistic fallacy consists in defining 'good' in terms of any other notion. This is the same as (f) above.⁵⁹

59) According to Gauthier, on Moore's account the naturalistic fallacy "is more properly considered to be the fallacy of improper definition - of identifying two objects which are distinct". (Gauthier, David P., 'Moore's Naturalistic Fallacy', American Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. 4, No. 4 (October 1968), p 315. His view is the same as my (a') above.

Moore claims that " the naturalistic fallacy reduces what is used as a fundamental principle of Ethics either to a tautology or to a statement about the meaning of a word".⁶⁰ It is this claim which is set against ethical naturalism. The naturalistic method is defined (by Moore) as that method which analyses the ethical predicate 'good' in terms of some other predicates. In defining the ethical predicate 'good' the method commits the naturalistic fallacy. The fallacy has the immediate consequence that the fundamental principles of Ethics are reduced either to a tautologies or to statements about the meaning of the word 'good'. Since both tautologies and statements about the meaning of words are non-ethical in character, ethical principles, when they are reduced to them, no longer remain ethical.⁶¹ The point of the argument is that the naturalistic method in defining the ethical predicate 'good' by committing the naturalistic fallacy leads to the denial that there are ethical principles. In other words, it leads to the position that what one calls ethical principles really are not ethical principles but merely are either tautologies (that is, analytic statements) or statements about the meaning of the word 'good'. Finally, since in the absence of ethical principles one cannot have Ethics, the naturalistic method in this sense makes Ethics impossible.

Let us consider what Moore is saying when he claims that the naturalistic fallacy reduces ethical principles either to tautologies or to statements about the meaning

60) Ibid Moore, G.E., Principia Ethica, C.U.P. (1903); pp xiii-xiv; also Section II, pp 10-12.

61) Ibid, p 7.

of the word 'good'. Moore's claim is that the naturalistic method commits the naturalistic fallacy, which reduces ethical principles to ethically non-significant propositions. Take, for example, the proposition 'Pleasure is good'. This proposition, Moore holds, defines 'good' in terms of 'pleasure',⁶² and therefore, is an identity proposition.⁶³ An identity proposition is a tautology. Tautologies do not give information about non-linguistic states of affairs. Specifically, they do not have any ethical significance. Ethical principles, however, are used as reasons in justification of ethical judgements. Such reasons are stated as significant propositions. If ethical principles were tautologies, then they cannot perform the function of justifying reasons.

Similar is the case with statements about the meaning of the word 'good'. If it is said that no definition of 'good' is a tautology, then, Moore contends, the only alternative which is left open is to say that the definition is a statement of the meaning of the word 'good'. That is to say, the definition is a statement of, or the report on, how the word 'good' is ordinarily used. Such reports on usage of the word 'good', however, are ethically non-significant. Therefore, they cannot function as ethical principles which by definition, are ethically significant propositions.

62) I will show in the course of the present study that it was a gross misunderstanding on the part of Moore to have regarded the proposition 'Pleasure is good' as an identity proposition.

63) Moore appears to use the expression 'identity proposition', 'analytic proposition', 'statement of definition', and 'tautology' almost synonymously.

Moore says:

"They [that is, ethical naturalists] are all so anxious to persuade us that what they call the good is what we really ought to do. 'Do, pray, act so, because the word "good" is generally used to denote actions of this nature'; such, on this [that is, naturalistic] view, would be the substance of their teaching. And in so far as they tell us how we ought to act, their teaching is truly ethical, as they mean it to be. But how perfectly absurd is the reason they would give for it 'You are to do this, because most people use a certain word to denote conduct such as this'. 'You are to say the thing which is not, because most people call it lying'. That is an argument just as good - My dear sirs, what we want to know from you as ethical teachers, is not how people use a word; it is not even, what kind of actions they approve, which is the use of this word 'good' may certainly imply; what we want to know is simply what is good". 64

I share agreement with Moore on the point that ethical principles must be ethically significant propositions. He expresses this point in the assertion that "propositions about the good are all of them synthetic and never analytic". 65 I agree with him also on the point that ethical principles function as reasons in justification of ethical judgements, and that they cannot perform this function if they were reduced either to tautologies or to statements about the meaning of the word 'good', both of which lack ethical significance. If the naturalistic fallacy reduces ethical principles to ethically non-significant propositions, then this is a very serious defect of the naturalistic method and we must avoid it if we want to have Ethics.

Let us ask the question: Is this defect a logical defect? Is the naturalistic fallacy a logical fallacy? From the mere statement of the naturalistic fallacy it is not quite

64) Moore, G.E., Principia Ethica, C.U.P. (1903); p 12.

65) Ibid, p 7.

apparent that the naturalistic fallacy really is a logical fallacy. What we can say is that it consists in defining 'good' as something else.⁶⁶ In any definition it is necessary that both the definiens and the definiendum are logically equivalent; that the definiens does not say more or less than the definiendum. If the definiens says more than the definiendum, the definition will be too wide; if it says less than the definiendum, it will be too narrow. Consider what is done when the naturalistic fallacy is committed. Clearly, what is done is that 'good' is defined as something else. The grotesqueness of this sort of definition is made glaringly obvious if we write the statement of definition of 'good' in terms of what it is not as follows:

'Good' = def. Non-good (for instance, pleasure).

It needs no saying that in this definition the definiendum says one thing and the definiens another. In other words, the definiens is not logically equivalent to the definiendum. It is thus clear from this analysis that in committing the naturalistic fallacy we are committing a fallacy of definition; hence a logical fallacy.

Again, there are consequences of committing the naturalistic fallacy which are logically disquieting. For, if the naturalistic fallacy is committed, then the fundamental principles of ethics are reduced either to tautologies or to statements of the meaning of the word 'good', both of which, however, are ethically non-significant.

⁶⁶) Ibid, p 11.

When so reduced to ethically non-significant statements, the principles cannot do the job of reasons for the justification of ethical judgements. Because if any principles are to be used as reasons for ethical judgements, then they themselves must be ethically significant propositions; in Moore's words, they must always be synthetic and never analytic propositions.

Furthermore, if the naturalistic fallacy is committed by defining 'good' as something else, it is then impossible to resolve ethical disagreement except by persuasion. For, given any definition of 'good' in terms of what 'good' is not, "it is then impossible either to prove that any other definition is wrong or even to deny such definition".⁶⁷

Finally the naturalistic fallacy is a logical fallacy in the sense in which 'logical fallacy' is equivalent in meaning to a 'fallacy arising out of the analysis of the logical behaviour of 'good' '. Moore seems to be saying that 'good' is one concept which cannot be analysed and hence any analysis of it is bound to be fallacious, and therefore, the naturalistic fallacy is a logical fallacy. What seems to happen when we define 'good' is that we assume unawares that the logical behaviour of the ethical predicate 'good' is similar to the logical behaviour of the naturalistic predicates in terms of which it is defined. By calling the attempt to define 'good' fallacious, Moore, it seems to me, is challenging this assumption, and saying that no such assumption is true.

67) Ibid, p 11.

My conclusion, therefore, is that the naturalistic fallacy is a logical fallacy. Consider the question, 'Can ethical naturalism avoid the naturalistic fallacy?' My answer is that it depends. If one accepts ethical naturalism on the lines of Moore's thinking, then it is a tautology to say that the naturalistic method commits the naturalistic fallacy, or to say that the method is such that it cannot avoid the naturalistic fallacy. The reason why it is a tautology to say so is that Moore defines the naturalistic method in such a way that it necessarily commits the naturalistic fallacy. According to Moore, the naturalistic method "consists in defining 'good' in terms of some one property of a natural object or of a collection of natural objects".⁶⁸ In other words, the method consists in defining 'good' in terms of what it is not. And, this is precisely what the naturalistic fallacy consists in - it consists in defining 'good' as something else.⁶⁹ It is clear, thus, that on Moore's account the assertion that ethical naturalism commits the naturalistic fallacy is an analytic proposition. Therefore, it is futile to ask, 'Can ethical naturalism avoid the naturalistic fallacy?' and seek to answer this question after one has already defined ethical naturalism a la Moore.

We now have a complete picture of what Moore is saying vis-à-vis ethical naturalism. This picture is capsuled in his cryptic assertion that ethical naturalism is inconsistent with the possibility of any Ethics whatever. We have seen

⁶⁸) Ibid, p 40.

⁶⁹) Ibid, p 11.

that he defines ethical naturalism as contradictory of his definition of Ethics, such that ethical naturalism, by definition, is denial of all ethics. If we accept Moore's definition of ethical naturalism together with his conception of Ethics, then it is an obvious truism to say that ethical naturalism is inconsistent with the possibility of all ethics. I have shown, however, that Moore's arguments in support of his theory of ethics, at best, are inconclusive. His basic argument from intuition is no more than an expression of the attitude 'Agree-with-me, or-not; this-is-what-I-call-Ethics-and-Ethical-Naturalism'. I have yet to show that his view of ethical naturalism is not only too restrictive, but it is false also. I shall do this in the course of the present inquiry. In the next chapter, I shall discuss a ~~various~~ variant of ethical naturalism conceived on Moore-an model.

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CHAPTER 2

DEDUCTION OF 'OUGHT' FROM 'IS'

In the preceding chapter, I tried to show that Moore's naturalistic fallacy argument leaves open the possibility of ethical naturalism. I propose to discuss in this and the next chapter two more criticisms of ethical naturalism, particularly (a) that ethical naturalism is untenable because it derives ought-judgements from is-statements, or ethical judgements from (value-neutral) factual statements, and (b) that ethical naturalism fails to account for the action-guiding function of ethical expressions, or in other words, that ethical naturalism destroys the autonomy of ethical discourse.

It will be observed that the three criticisms, two to be discussed in this and the next chapter and one already discussed in the first chapter (that is, the naturalistic fallacy argument) are closely interrelated. I have already hinted how the naturalistic fallacy argument - which is an argument against any attempt at defining 'good' or any ethical expression in terms of any naturalistic expressions - leads to the fallacy of deriving ought-judgements from is-statements. I will try to show in the present chapter that the deduction of an ought-judgement from an is-statement is logically impossible, and that ethical naturalism is untenable if it asserts that such a deduction is possible.

Let me try to state precisely the criticism that any ethical naturalist must derive an ethical judgement from a set of empirical or factual judgements. What the critic is disputing is not that given an ethical judgement and a factual statement, one can logically derive another ethical judgement. For example, he is not questioning the validity of the argument of the form:

α) If there is an x and x is good and there is a y which belongs to the same set as x belongs to, then y must be good.

What he is questioning is that it is impossible to validate the passage from

β) 'The fact that x has such and such natural characteristics'
to ' x is good'.

It is one thing to say:

x is P , and P is good,
Therefore, x is good;

and quite a different thing to say:

x is P ,
Therefore, x is good.

The point that the critic of ethical naturalism is trying to make is that an ethical naturalist must hold that any argument of beta-type is a valid argument. Thus, Hare says:

"The method of naturalism is so to characterize the meanings of the key terms moral terms that, given certain factual premisses, not themselves moral judgements, moral conclusions can be deduced from them" ¹

1) Hare, R.M., Freedom and Reason, Oxford University Press, Oxford; 1963; p 86.

It is in order to exclude arguments of beta-type that Hare enjoins the following rule for any ethical reasoner:

"No imperative conclusion can be validly drawn from a set of premisses which does not contain at least one imperative."²

What the critics of ethical naturalism are denying is that the justifying relation between the factual statements (called premisses) and the ethical conclusion is the logical relation of deducibility or entailment. This is a negative position. What that justifying relation actually is is conceived on different models. On this issue, we have, in general, five broad positions:-

- 1) That of Stevenson who categorically denies that the relation between factual statements and ethical judgement is any sort of logical relation. His positive thesis is that the relation is psychological, not logical.³
- 2) That of Toulmin who rejects the deductive model of reasoning in ethics. His positive thesis is that in ethics we have a peculiar sort of inference, which he calls 'evalutive inference'.⁴
- 3) That of Hare who says that ethical reasoning is not linear, but a sort of exploration.⁵
- 4) The position of Nowell-Smith, who asserts that the justifying relation is not the relation of deducibility or entailment, but only a weaker sort of relation such that if one asserted the premisses and denied the conclusion, one does not contradict oneself, but only says something logically odd.⁶

2) Hare, R.M., *The Language of Morals*, O.U.P. (1952); p 28.
Also, for an excellent discussion on imperative inference,

- 5) Finally, the position of Kurt Baier who asserts that the justifying relation of factual statements to ethical judgement is the relation of 'implication'. Generally speaking, Baier's thesis is a development of Toulmin's thesis according to which it is legitimate to pass from factual premisses to ethical conclusion.⁷

The positions (1), (3), and (4) are strictly non-cognitivist positions; they in one way or another deny that it is possible to derive an ethical judgement from non-ethical factual premisses. Therefore, I will not discuss these three positions here. I propose to consider the positions (2) and (5). I have selected these two positions for two reasons: One, that both these positions claim in one way or another that an ethical judgement can be logically derived from strictly (value-neutral) factual premisses, and two, that the logical apparatus that these two positions employ is suggestive of certain peculiarities of ethical reasoning which it is the business of the present study to bring them out.

see Nescher, Nicholas, The Logic of Commands, London; Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1966.

- 3) Stevenson, C.L., Ethics and Language, New Haven & London; Yale University Press, 1944; Chapter VII on Validity; pp 152-173.
- 4) Toulmin, Stephen, An Examination of the Place of Reason in Ethics, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; 1960.
- 5) Hare, R.M., The Language of Morals, O.U.P. (1952).
- 6) Nowell-Smith, P.H., Ethics, Penguin Books Ltd., 1954; pp 79-84.
- 7) Baier, Kurt, The Moral Point of View, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York; 1958.

Toulmin's Position:-

According to Toulmin, it is possible to give, rather in fact we do give, factual reasons for ethical judgements. By a 'factual reason' I mean any descriptive, value-neutral factual statement cited as a reason for or against any ethical judgement. The passage from reasons to the judgement is inferential, such that it is logically legitimate to pass from factual reasons to an ethical conclusion. This inference is neither deductive nor inductive, but 'evaluative';

" An evaluative inference is that form of inference peculiar to ethical arguments, by which we pass from factual reasons to an ethical conclusions."⁸

A factual reason has to be a value-neutral empirical statement. If it is a value-loaded statement or ~~if~~ it is one in which the key terms are value-loaded, then it is not a problem to derive an ethical judgement from factual premisses. For, if that case, the inference can be obviously deductive. We can then make explicit the value character of the factual premiss and put it as the major premiss and claim that the ethical conclusion does not say more than what is already contained in the meanings of the words involved in the premisses; that is to say, the ethical judgement follows logically from the 'factual' premisses. In such a case, the passage won't be from purely factual premisses to an ethical conclusion, but from covertly ethical premisses to an overtly ethical conclusion. I ought, therefore, to understand Toulmin

8) Toulmin, Stephen, An Examination of the Place of Reason in Ethics, C.U.P. (1950); p 38.

when he talks of factual premisses that by the expression 'factual premisses' he really means value-neutral ~~non~~ factual premisses. If so understood, there is a real problem in his scheme of things of the passage from factual premisses to an ethical conclusion. It has to be explained how the passage from factual premisses to an ethical conclusion can be valid.

What is Toulmin's answer? From the logical point of view, any argument which exhibits a passage from value-neutral factual premiss to an ethical conclusion cannot be said to be valid; for, in such a case, the conclusion will always be saying more than what is already said in the premisses. In other words, we will be going beyond the given evidence, and this no deductive logic would permit. Toulmin, therefore, rightly denies that the premiss-conclusion relation in an ethical argument or inference is that of deduction.

Toulmin distinguishes between two types of arguments, substantial, and analytic. I will presently explain what he means by these ~~large~~ terms. Let me first give here the anatomy of a fully-formulated argument as discussed by Toulmin in his book, The Uses of Argument.

(1) Harry was born in Bermuda

Since (2) A man born in Bermuda will generally be a British subject

On account of (3) The following statutes and other legal provisions;

(4) So,

(5) presumably,

unless (6) Both his parents were aliens/he has

become a naturalised American/ ... ;

Harry is a British subject.

(1) is Data (D); (2) is Warrant (W); (3) is Backing for the warrant (B); (4) is the Conclusion (C); (5) is the set of qualifications which restrict the scope of the conclusion (Q); and (6) is the set of conditions of rebuttal which may make the conclusion 'defeasible' (R). Now, an argument is said to be analytic if C does not say more than what is already said in B, while if C says something which is not contained in B, then the argument is said to be substantial. Toulmin;

"An argument from D to C will be called analytic if and only if the backing for the warrant authorising it includes, explicitly or implicitly, the information conveyed in the conclusion itself. Where this is so, the statement 'D, B, and also C' will, as a rule, be tautological".⁹

Again;

"Where the backing for the warrant does not contain the information conveyed in the conclusion, the statement 'D, B, and also C' will never be a tautology, and the argument will be a substantial one."¹⁰

In the case of analytic argument, we use the rules of formal logical inference. Given the rules and the premisses, we can pass from the premisses to the conclusion. This passage from premisses to conclusion will be valid because it is in conformity with the rules of inference. For illustration, in the argument

∴ If P, then Q

and P,

Therefore, Q,

9) Toulmin, Stephen, The Uses of Argument, C.U.P. (1958); p 125. My italics.

10) Ibid, p 125. My italics.

The passage from 'If P , then Q ' and ' P ' to ' Q ' is sanctioned by the rule of modus ponens (MP), and therefore, the argument is valid. Further, the conclusion in this argument does not say more than what is already said in the premisses; therefore, the argument is analytic. In the case of a substantial argument, the warrant includes two things; One, the rules of formal inference, and two, certain additional rules or conditions of inference which validate the passage from premisses to conclusion. An instance of substantial argument is any ethical argument. In an ethical argument, Toulmin says, we pass from value-neutral factual premisses to an ethical conclusion. Consider the following arguments:

6) An action A conforms to the prevalent code of any given society;

Therefore, I ought to do A .

7) An action A avoids causing avoidable suffering to other members of my society;

Therefore, I ought to do A .

Here the conclusion is ethical, the premiss is a factual premiss, and the passage from the premiss to the conclusion is valid; this is what Toulmin will hold. What are the rules of formal inference and certain additional rules or conditions of inference which, on Toulmin's thesis, validate the passage from the factual premiss to the ethical conclusion in this argument? I shall come to the rules of formal inference later; first I will consider the rules or conditions of substance which make us characterize the argument as ethical and also which have share in validating the passage from the factual premiss to the ethical conclusion. Toulmin gives two such rules:-

- a) The test of principle: Considerations which show that a particular individual action is in conformity with the prevalent moral code of a given community within which the action is done.¹¹
- b) The test of general fecundity: Considerations which show that certain action will avoid causing to other members of the community some inconvenience, annoyance, or suffering.¹²

It should be noted that both (a) and (b) are moral, not logical, considerations which function as rules of inference for validating the passage from certain factual premisses to certain ethical conclusion. Any action which satisfies either the test (a) or the test (b) or both is good; if it fails to satisfy either of the tests, then it is bad. In order to pass logically and validly from the factual premisses to the ethical conclusion as in the arguments (β) and (γ), let us not assume these two ethical considerations, but state them explicitly in the form of Rules which can be used when I argue;

- a') Any action which conforms to the prevalent code of my community is good or it ought to be done.
- b') Any action which avoids causing avoidable suffering to other members of my community is good or it ought to be done.

Now, attaching these rules to the ethical arguments (β) and (γ), their structure become as clear as it could be desired. If we did this, then (β) and (γ) will have either of the following forms;

11) Toulmin, Stephen C., An Examination of the Place of Reason in Ethics, C.U.P. (1950); 132.
 12) Ibid, p 160.

(β') Any action which conforms to the prevalent code of my community is good, or it ought to be done;
The action A conforms to the prevalent code of my community;

Therefore, A ought to be done.

(γ') Any action which avoids the avoidable suffering to other members of my community is good, or it ought to be done;

The action A avoids the avoidable suffering to other members of my community;

Therefore, A ought to be done.

From (β') and (γ'), it becomes apparent that when we make explicit the logical structure of the two ethical arguments (β) and (γ) using both (a) and (b), the two ethical considerations recommended by Toulmin for validating the passage from factual premisses to ethical conclusion, the arguments turn out to be strictly of the deductive type, the relation between premisses and conclusion being the logical relation of deducibility. In Toulmin's terminology, the arguments become analytic; their conclusions do not say more than what is already said in the premisses. The point is that when all this is done, as I have done above, Toulmin's substantial type of arguments, in fact, turn out to be analytic.¹³

Perhaps the above consequence can be avoided. The alternative is to deny that (a) and (b), the two ethical considerations, function as warrants of validity for passing

13) Cf. Hare's review of Toulmin's book, An Examination of the Place of Reason in Ethics, published in PHILOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, Vol. 1, No. 4 (July 1951), pp 372-375.

from factual premisses to ethical conclusion. This alternative, however, is equally unacceptable. For, on Toulmin's thesis, if we denied (a) and (b) as warrants, we cannot legitimately pass from factual premisses to an ethical conclusion. For, facts are neutral with respect to values. Given any fact, it can be good, bad, or indifferent in different contexts, or even in the same context if ~~actual conclusion~~ looked at from different points of view. Therefore, any ethical argument which does not utilise either (a) or (b) cannot be a valid argument on Toulmin's thesis. Toulmin can logically derive an ethical conclusion from factual premisses without using (a) or (b) as warrants only at the cost of committing the naturalistic fallacy by defining the ethical expressions occurring in the conclusion in terms of the factual expressions occurring in the premisses.

The upshot of my argument is that Toulmin's special logical apparatus to validate the passage from factual premisses to ethical conclusion turns out, on scrutiny, to be either apparently alluring but in fact useless, or its premisses which Toulmin considers factual really are not value-neutral factual premisses but are disguised ethical judgements, such that the passage from them to the ethical conclusion does not seem to be invalid.

II

Kurt Baier's position:-

Baier begins with the thesis that in any ethical argument the premisses which are rules of reason are factual statements and the conclusion is an ethical judgement distinguished

by its imperatival character.¹⁴ The relation between premisses and conclusion is that of deducibility in spite of the fact that the premisses which consist of factual statements are of logically different type from the conclusion which is an ethical judgement. This sort of talk, that the factual statements are logically different from ethical judgements and that yet there is the relation of deducibility between them, such that an ethical judgement can be logically deduced from certain factual statements, is not very intelligible to me. Let us see how Baier tries to substantiate his thesis. The general format of Baier's argument from factual premisses to ethical conclusion will have the following structure:-

- 1) Moral rule of reason
- 2) Statement of a specific case
- 3) Conclusion

where both (1) and (2) are factual, while (3) is ethical. Here, two things may be noted. One: to say that an expression is a moral rule of reason or that it is a moral consideration-making belief, or that it is a moral conviction, is to say one and the same thing.¹⁵ Again, to say that these rules of reason are moral is only to say that they "occur in moral deliberations and the occurrence of them makes deliberation moral".¹⁶ These rules of factual statements and their function is "to serve as major premisses in practical arguments".¹⁷

Two: Baier does not seem to make a distinction between saying that something is true and saying that something is accepted to be true. Therefore, to say that the moral rules of

14) Baier, Kurt, The Moral Point of View, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York; 1968; p 178.

15) Ibid, p 171.

16) Ibid, p 169. 17) Ibid, p 191.

reason are true is only to say that they are required or accepted from the moral point of view. The moral point of view, formally, is doing things on principle, not in the interest of any body¹⁸, and materially, it is doing things for the good of everyone alike¹⁹.

Let us now ask: Under what conditions can factual premisses imply an ethical conclusion? My answer is that they never can. Indeed, my 'can' is strictly a logical 'can'; and my answer is from the logical point of view. From a strictly logical point of view, factual premisses can imply an ethical conclusion only when the man who is arguing has already committed the naturalistic fallacy by defining the ethical expressions occurring in the conclusion in terms of some factual expressions occurring in the premisses. This, I hope, Baier has not done. Therefore, I do not think that he has committed the naturalistic fallacy.

One alternative is that Baier's moral rules of reason really are not factually statements, but are disguised ethical judgements. If they were not disguised ethical judgements, Baier cannot say that the relation between premisses and conclusion is the relation of implication. But he does assert that the relation between premisses and conclusion is the relation of implication, such that an ethical conclusion can be logically deduced from factual premisses. Nor would he, then, be prepared to call these rules of reason moral rules of reason. But he does that also; and I feel that he is right in doing so.

18) Ibid, pp 191-195.

19) Ibid, pp 200-204.

Finally, a careful reading of The Moral Point of View brings out the typical ethical character of Baier's rules of reason. In order to make my point clear let me consider the example which Baier himself gives²⁰ for illustrating the logical structure of an ethical argument. The argument is:

- (1) a) The fact that if I did x I would enjoy doing x is a reason for me to do x ;
- b) I would enjoy doing x if I did x ;
- c) Therefore, I ought to do x (other things being equal).

In this argument, and in any argument which is characteristically practical or ethical, the phrase "I have a reason to do x " is logically equivalent to "I ought to do x ". There is no difference between saying "One ought to ..." and "There is reason for ...", such that to say "One ought to ..." means "There is a reason for ...".²¹ Thus the following two arguments cited by Baier himself²² are logically equivalent:-

- (2) a) One ought to sow early after a wet Spring;
- b) The Spring is wet;
- c) Therefore, I (you, we, etc.) ought to sow (or: have reasons for sowing) early.
- (3) a) A wet Spring is a reason for sowing early;
- b) The Spring is wet;
- c) Therefore, I (you, we, etc.) ought to sow (or: have reasons for sowing) early.

Now reformulate (a) in the argument (1) by substituting "One ought to ..." in all the occurrences of "There is reason for ...".

Thus reformulated (a) will be as follows:-

a') I ought to do x if I would enjoy doing x .

(b) will become (b'), and (c) will become (c'). The whole argument (1)

20) Ibid, p 191.

21) Ibid, p 280.

22) Ibid, p280.

then, will have the following form:-

- (4) a') If I would enjoy doing x then I ought to do x ;
 b') I would enjoy doing x if I did x ;
 c') Therefore, I ought to do x (other things being equal).

Needless to say that (4) (4 a') makes the ethical character of (a) perfectly manifest. Since (a) or (a') contains an individual rule of reason as distinguished from a social rule of reason, I take it that the ethical character of the individual rule of reason is shown beyond doubt. Similarly, the ethical character of the social rules of reason can also be shown. Thus, Baier has failed to logically deduce an ethical conclusion from a set of value-neutral factual premisses. He has failed to do this because it is logically impossible to make a logical deduction of an ethical conclusion from factual premisses.

I have tried to show in the foregoing that even the best attempts by the best minds in ethics have failed in logically deriving an ethical judgement from a set of value-neutral factual statements. The reason is that such a derivation is logically impossible. Hence, ethical naturalism is untenable if it asserts that ethical judgements are deducible from factual ones. For, then it must commit the naturalistic fallacy, if it succeeds in so making the deduction. Factual judgements can entail or imply ethical judgements only when the two sorts of judgements belong to the same logical type whatever that logical type might be, descriptive, prescriptive, or what you will. The assertion that factual

judgements entail or imply ethical judgements presupposes that the two types of judgements belong to the same type. Conversely, if it is asserted that both factual and ethical judgements belong to the same type, it becomes reasonable then to explore the possibility of the logical relation of deducibility or entailment between them. Put differently, to assert the relation to be that of deducibility or entailment presupposes the assumption that it is not the case that ethical judgements are logically different from factual judgements. But if it is held that ethical judgements are logically different from factual judgements, then one cannot hold that ethical judgements are entailed or implied by factual judgements.

We may legitimately ask: Do we ever argue in ethical matters without any ethical assumption or presupposition? It appears that we never do so. Whenever we argue ethically, we always have some value-presuppositions which determine the field of our evidence that we give in support of our ethical judgements. Here I share agreement with Toulmin when he says that the kind of grounds or backing given to support a warrant in any ethical argument depends on the field of argument.²³ No set of reasons can be relevant to justify an ethical judgement unless it contains at least one ethical premiss. This fact of ordinary ethical reasoning suggests two things:-

- 1) If we make the ethical presuppositions explicit, stating them as premisses in the argument, the relation between the complete set of premisses and the ethical

conclusion can always be shown to be the relation of deducibility or entailment.

2) If we take the argument without, or in separation from, the ethical assumptions, the relation between the premisses and the ethical conclusion can never be that of deducibility or entailment, unless the reasoner obliterates the logical distinction between an ethical judgement and a factual judgement.

.....

CHAPTER 3

NON-DISTINCTION OF ETHICAL FROM FACTUAL EXPRESSIONS

I propose to discuss in the present chapter the position that ethical expressions, logically, are of the same type as factual expressions, such that it is only the subject-matter of them that distinguishes ethical expressions from factual ones. The point made is this; Logically ethical expressions stand at par with factual expressions in that they both are analysable and verifiable on the perceptual model, and hence, can be true or false on the same model.

Let me clarify two points immediately. One: What precisely is a factual statement? and What do I mean when I use the phrase 'ethical statement'? Two: What is to be understood by the expression 'perceptual model'? and How is it related to the use of words like 'verifiable', 'true', and 'false'? I may begin by giving some unambiguous examples of expressions which are analysed and verified on the perceptual model. Such examples include expressions like "General de Gaulle has ceased to be the President of France after the poll defeat"¹, "It rained in this locality a shortwhile ago", "Iron when heated expands", "The top of the mercury column coincides with the mark 92 at time t ". In order to verify such statements, one has to make certain relevant observations or perform certain relevant experiments. In short, one has to use the methods of empirical sciences for the verification of such statements. I propose to call the model which involves the use of methods of empirical sciences for the verification

1) The Hindustan Times, dated April 29, 1969; City Edition, New Delhi.

of statements the perceptual model of analysis and verification. Whether or not all statements of science can be so verified on the perceptual model is immaterial to my general thesis⁵; for my purpose here is only to illustrate the meaning of the expression 'perceptual model'.

Distinguished from the perceptual model, there is what I propose to call the justificatory model of verification of statements. On this model, any request for the verification of any statement is met with by giving a set of reasons which tend to show that the given statement is not without reasons and that it is justified by certain rules of relevance and valid inference (collectively called "rules of reasoning"². Paul Taylor has discussed this notion of 'rules of reasoning' in his book, Normative Discourse, in detail.³ Explicating the sense of the rules of relevance and the rules of valid inference Taylor says:-

"These [that is, Rules of reasoning] are the rules we implicitly follow when we try to justify our claim that something is good, that an act is right, or that someone ought to do a certain act. The rules of reasoning tell us, first, what makes a reason relevant to such claims and second, what makes a reason a good reason in support of, or in opposition to, such claim. The rules that determine the relevance of reasons, I call "rules of relevance". The rules that determine whether a relevant reason is also a good reason, I call "rules of valid inference".⁴

In our ordinary ethical discourse, there are many unambiguous examples of such statements as are verified on the justificatory model of verification. These examples include statements like "This pen is good", "Mr. X is a good man", "Helping the victims of Koyana earthquake is a good action", "I ought to tell the truth", "You ought to keep your promises".

These statements are not verified to be true or false by observation alone. If they were verifiable by observation alone, then there would be no need to distinguish the justificatory model from the perceptual model of verification.⁵ Take for instance the statement "This pen is good". This statement is normative, though non-ethical. In order to verify whether or not this statement is true, (1) I must record the empirically observable properties of the pen, properties like the flow of ink, its shape, size, and a host of other properties including its cost and durability. All such statements about the pen which are reports on the empirically observable properties of it are verifiable to be true or false on the perceptual model of verification. In no case, however, a conjunction of these statements entails the statement "This pen is good". The additional element which is required

2) Taylor, Paul W., Normative Discourse, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J. (1961); pp viii-ix, Preface.

3) Ibid, p. viii.

4) Ibid, p. viii.

5) The Oxford English Dictionary records at least six different senses of the word 'verification'. I call attention to particularly two senses; One: 'to verify' a statement means to check up whether or not there exists some state of affairs or condition which the statement claims to describe. Two: 'To verify a statement means to check up whether or not it is in accord with some standard or criterion. My use of the expression 'verification on the perceptual model' corresponds to the first sense; that of 'verification on the justificatory model' corresponds to the second sense.

for the verification of this statement is (2) the assertion that the properties P_1, P_2, \dots, P_m taken together or singly are the accepted criteria of the goodness of the pen. This second and the last element is the differentia of the justificatory model of verification.

The point may be put slightly differently. In the case of the perceptual model of verification, a correct report on the empirically observable properties of iron, for example, constitutes both a necessary and sufficient condition for the truth of statements like "Iron when heated expands". But, in the case of the justificatory model of verification, a correct report on the empirically observable properties of any thing or action concerned constitutes only a necessary condition but not a sufficient condition for the truth of the statements like "This pen is good". In the second case, as the (2) above, the sufficient condition is constituted of some rule or principle which enables us to relate statements about the empirically observable properties of a certain thing or action to the statement the truth of which is desired to be shown.

These two models of verification are to be kept distinct, or else we are likely to land in many a conceptual muddle. Let me call the verification on the perceptual model of verification the alpha-sense of 'verification', and the verification on the justificatory model of verification the beta-sense of 'verification'. It is regrettable that in many recent books and articles on ethical theory these two

alpha and beta senses of 'verification' have not been kept apart; rather they have been conflated with each other. A consequence of this conflation has been that ethical judgements which are verifiable in the beta-sense of 'verification' are understood to be so verifiable in the alpha-sense of 'verification'. As they are taken to be verifiable in the alpha-sense, their logical status also is misconstrued to be the same as that of the statements that are verifiable in the alpha-sense. And, since the statements which are verifiable in the alpha-sense are taken to be descriptive of factual states of affairs, ethical judgements are also mistaken to be descriptive of factual states of affairs. The point that I wish to make is that the conflation of the alpha and beta senses of 'verification' has resulted in the failure to distinguish the logical status of ethical judgements from that of statements of facts, and therewith an unpardonable assimilation of ethical judgements into the class of factual statements.

The confusion of the alpha sense of 'verification' with the beta sense of 'verification' is reflected in the ambiguous use of words 'true' and 'false'. As I have distinguished the two models of verification, and also the two senses of 'verification', the alpha sense and the beta sense, I propose to distinguish correspondingly the two senses of the words 'true' and 'false'. I will call these senses the alpha sense and the beta sense of 'true' and 'false'. For clarity's sake, it is necessary to keep these two uses of the words 'true' and 'false' apart.

There is a third use of the words 'true' and 'false'. According to this use, a statement is said to be true if and only if it is accepted, and a statement is said to be false if and only if it is rejected. To say that a statement S is true, is to say that 'accept S ', and to say that a statement S is false, is to say that 'reject S '.⁶ This use of the word 'true' thus, apparently, equates true with accepted to be true. Logically, however, 'is true' cannot be equated with 'accepted to be true', such that to say that a given statement is accepted to be true is to say that the given statement is true. For that which is true may not be accepted to be true, and also that which is accepted to be true may not in fact be true.

Let us consider the question, 'What precisely is a factual statement?' and 'What does it mean to say that a certain judgement is ethical?' One way of distinguishing a factual statement from an ethical judgement is to say that a factual statement is one which is said to be verifiable in the alpha sense, i.e., verifiable on the perceptual model of verification. Another way of making the distinction is to say that a factual statement is an integral part of a complete description of the object which is to be described, such that if one wanted to give a complete description of the object, one will have to include all such statements.⁷ In short, a factual statement is usually descriptive. It is immaterial to my thesis whether

6) Cf. Johnson, W.E., Logic Pt I, (Cambridge University Press; 1921); reprinted by Dover Publications, Inc., New York; 1964; pp 8, 224.

7) Moore, G.E., Philosophical Studies, London, 1922; pp 253-275.

or not it is empirically possible to give all the possible statements which ^{go} into the complete description of an object. A factual statement is always either actually, or in principle at least, verifiable in the alpha sense; and as such it can have truth-values 'truth' and 'falsity' again in the alpha sense only.

An ethical judgement, on the other hand, is not descriptive. The reason why it is not descriptive is that it does not have to enter into a value-neutral description of the object in which is being described, such that one can give a complete description of the object without ever including in it an ethical or value judgement about the object concerned. Suppose for example, you have to describe an object Q . Let p denote factual statements about the object, and q denote ethical judgement about it. Then, a conjunction of the statements p_1, p_2, \dots, p_k will give you a description of the object Q ; and this description will be complete even if you never included in it the ethical judgement q in it. Now, suppose you included the ethical judgement q also in your description of Q . Then, you could say, for instance, that the description of Q could not be complete unless q were also included in its description. Let us say that in such a case a complete description of Q will consist of a conjunction of statements (p_1, p_2, \dots, p_k) and q . When this is the case, then the description of Q must be said to be a value-loaded description for the reason that it includes a value judgement q in it.

It is important to make this distinction between a value-loaded description and a value-neutral description. I call

S a value-loaded descriptive statement if and only if S describes the object Q and also evaluates it. For instance, the statement "He is a thief" is value-loaded descriptive statement; for it does two things at the same time: (1) it describes the man that he is a thief, and (2) it evaluates the man as a bad character. Similarly, I call S' a value-neutral descriptive statement if and only if S' only describes the object Q without evaluating it. The statement "This carpet is red" is an instance of a value-neutral descriptive statement; for it only describes the colour of the carpet but does not evaluate it. The importance of the distinction becomes obvious from a consideration of the fact that it is perfectly possible to define ethical expressions in terms of value-loaded descriptive expressions, and also to deduce an ethical judgement logically from a set of value-loaded descriptive statements without committing the naturalistic fallacy.

I have tried to show so far that an ethical judgement is neither descriptive nor verifiable, and hence neither true nor false on the perceptual model of verification. Also, I have tried to show that while a factual statement is used to describe an object or a situation, an ethical judgement is not so used. Clearly, an ethical judgement is different from a factual statement.⁸ This difference strictly speaking, is logical difference, such that if this difference is not recognized and ethical judgements are assimilated to the class of factual statements, we land into many a conceptual confusion,

8) Prasad explicates this difference between ethical expressions and factual expressions in terms of the difference of purposes for which the two sorts of expressions are used. (Prasad, R., 'Evaluative, Factual and Referring Expressions', *The Visva-Bharati Journal of Philosophy*, Vol V, No 1 (August 1968); pp72-82.

and also we cannot say what we do want to say (viz., commend, recommend, advise, approve, or broadly, prescribe an action ethically) whenever we make an ethical judgement.⁹ What I am trying to say is, in other words, that ethical judgements essentially are prescriptive, not descriptive.¹⁰ They are used for purposes of prescribing certain guide-lines for conduct, commending, or approving of certain things, persons, their actions, or practices. This fact about the use of ethical expressions is recognized, more or less, by almost all ethical thinkers; but it is precisely this fact that cannot be accounted for on the naturalistic interpretation of the use of ethical expressions. Thus, Hare says;

"What is wrong with naturalist theories is that they leave out the prescriptive or commendatory element in value-judgements, by seeking to make them derivable from statements of fact".¹¹

And again,

"Value-terms have a special function in language, that of commending; and so they plainly cannot be defined in terms of other words which themselves do not perform this function; for if this is done, we are deprived of a means of performing the function".¹²

point is that the logic of ethical expressions is different from the logic of factual expressions and that if we assimilated ethical expressions to the class of factual expressions, we won't be able to do what we do want to do when we use ethical expressions.

Cf. Hare, R.M., The Language of Morals, Oxford University Press, Oxford; 1952; p 84.

Ibid, pp 1-16, 155-158. Hare says; "They the words 'right', and 'ought' are used primarily for giving advice or instructions, or in general for guiding choices", p 155. Again, "The word 'ought' is used for prescribing". p 155.

Ibid, p 82.

Ibid, p 91.

Let me clarify the assertion that with purely descriptive statements you cannot perform a prescriptive function. I will do this by way of an example. Consider the sentence: "People hold that helping the needful is good". This sentence is used to describe a certain moral habit of a certain people at a certain given time. It does not say a whit more than communicate the fact that at a given time t some people hold that helping the needful is good. If somebody desired to know whether or not this statement is true, he will take resort to observing the habits of the people in question. And, if he found out by observing the people in concrete empirical situations that whenever or wherever there was somebody who was needful, people helped him and regarded the action of helping him to be good, he will be convinced of the truth of the statement. The verification of the truth of this statement is done in the alpha sense of 'verification', and the statement is said to be true in the corresponding alpha sense of 'true'. The statement, as such, cannot be used for prescribing the action of helping the needful. That is to say, by uttering the sentence "People hold that helping the needful is good" you are not prescribing that one ought to help the needful.

Now, consider the case in which this sentence is employed to do the ethical job of prescribing that one ought to help the needful: "People hold that helping the needful is good", "Therefore, helping the needful is good". If the sentence "People hold, &c." were an ethical sentence then the inference from it to the sentence "Helping the needful is good" would be a justified inference. But the sentence "People hold, &c." is not an ethical sentence; it only states what the people

in question as a matter of fact hold, and one may retort that what people hold may not be good, and therefore, helping the needful may not be good. The point is that facts are neutral with respect to values, such that the fact that people hold a certain opinion about a certain thing is neutral with respect to its being good or bad. Therefore, unless you asserted that what people hold is good, you cannot assert on its strength alone that helping the needful is good.

Let us look at it from another angle. To say at the same time that " x is and is not good" is a self-contradiction. But no self-contradiction is involved in saying "People hold that x is good, but x is not good". The reason is that the assertion " x is not good" is perfectly compatible with the assertion "People hold that x is good"; for here, both the assertions are not of the same logical order, since one is and the other is not a moral judgement.

The point that I want to make is that ethical judgement, is not of the same logical order with factual statement; the two, as has been noticed by Hare and some others, do two logically different things. What the ethical judgement is used to do is to prescribe some guide-lines for moral choice and action, and, this job cannot be done by a factual statement.

Consider now the question, 'Can ethical judgement be analysed in terms of any one or a conjunction of factual statements?' My answer to this question is, No. No ethical judgement can be analysed in terms of a set of value-neutral factual statements. One reason why this cannot be done

I have discussed in the first chapter. And the reason is that one could do this only if one already defined ethical expressions occurring in the ethical judgement in terms of some naturalistic ones. But this cannot be done unless the naturalistic fallacy is committed. Another reason why no ethical judgement can be analysed in terms of a set of value-neutral factual statements is that ethical terms are used to do prescriptive jobs; therefore, if they were translated or analysed in terms of factual terms, they cannot perform the function they are designed to do.¹³

To conclude; The prescriptive function constitutes the semantic peculiarity of ethical expressions (terms and sentences). This semantic peculiarity (or as some may like to put it, 'semantic autonomy') of ethical expressions is destroyed when the ethical naturalist holds that ethical expressions are descriptive, verifiable, and capable of having the usual truth-values in terms of the perceptual model of verification.

The ethical naturalist may defend his thesis that ethical judgements are descriptive, verifiable, and capable of being true and false on the perceptual model in the following manner; He may say, for example, that his naturalistic thesis does not require that ethical expressions have no other function than description. He may say that ethical judgements are descriptive and that at the same time they perform the job of prescribing guide-lines for moral choice and action.

13) Ibid, p 91.

In taking this line of defense, what the ethical naturalist has in mind is that both describing and prescribing are, among others, two kinds of linguistic performance, and that the different kinds of linguistic performance are not necessarily exclusive of one another.¹⁴

Let me formulate the various possibilities of conjoining prescription with description, and then examine how they fit into the naturalistic ethical framework. Mainly there can be two general positions: (1) An expression is both prescriptive and descriptive with equal strength; (2) An expression is both prescriptive and descriptive with unequal strength. Under the second heading there may be held two different positions: (a) An expression is primarily prescriptive, but secondarily descriptive; and (b) An expression is primarily descriptive, but secondarily prescriptive. Now, so far as I know, no ethical thinker has held the positions (1) and (2b). The position (2a) has been held by many philosophers, for example, Frankena and Prasad.¹⁵ But in the case of all the three positions, the ethical thinker must assert a conjunction of the prescriptive and descriptive functions in the use of an ethical expression. That is to say, he must say that ethical expressions are both descriptive and prescriptive. It will be remembered that many a so-called non-cognitivist has taken this sort of position. If we waive the Hare-an association of prescriptivity and agree to use this word in a very wide sense so that emotive meaning may also be included in its scope, then I may cite C.L. Stevenson as the first ethicist who in his

14) Toulmin, S.E., & Baier, K., 'On Describing', Mind, 61 (1952); p25.

Second Pattern of Analysis, conjoined the emotive (very close to prescriptive) meaning of ethical expressions with their descriptive meaning. This thesis has given rise to the problem of the logical relation of the descriptive to the prescriptive function of ethical expressions. This problem has been haunting ethical thinkers for quite some time; and so far as I know no satisfactory conception of the relation has been offered so far, such that the naturalistic ethical position may be maintained successfully.¹⁶ I propose to consider one recent position on this issue, namely that of Phillip Blaire Rice.¹⁷

Rice's claim is that his ethical theory is naturalistic through and through. He asserts that goodness is either a property or 'goodness' refers to a property functioning in a peculiar manner. More precisely:

"We should ask, not whether goodness is a property, but whether the judgement, "This is good", is or presupposes both an assertion that this has a certain distinctive property and an assumption that the expression performs a certain distinctive function not comprised in such a judgement as "This is red" or "This is an asteroid". And this double-barralled question, it will be agreed, should be answered "yes".¹⁸

According to him, ethical concepts, semantically speaking, are dual in nature. They are both descriptive and prescriptive. Whenever we assert that something is good, we are doing two things at the same time. We are saying (1) that that thing

15) Prasad, Rajendra, 'Non-cognitive Discourse', The Journal of the Indian Academy of Philosophy, Vol II; pp 59-66.
 Frankena, W.K., 'Cognitive and Non-cognitive' in Thought, Language, Thought, and Culture (Ed. Paul Henle); Ann Arbor (1958)

Both these philosophers are not naturalists in ethics; only they assert that there is a conjunction of prescriptive and descriptive functions of in the use of ethical expressions

which is judged to be good has certain Identifying or Conferring Properties, and also (2) that what we say also has certain prescriptive function, which Rice calls the Matrix Meaning.

He says:

"The general meaning of a normative term consists in its MM (non-cognitive) plus its IP (cognitive) if one can be found".¹⁹

Thus, the models for the Rice-an type of naturalistic analysis of 'good' and 'ought' will be as follows:-

- 1) "This is good" means "This has the IP of goodness;
do or seek this under condition c".²⁰
- 2) "You ought to do this" means "This has a certain
IP; do this (where it is assumed
that the conditions have been
satisfied)".²⁰

It is vital to the understanding of Rice's naturalistic position to remember that not only the Identifying or Conferring properties are natural properties, but the Matrix Meaning also is a natural property. Thus he says:

"the MM will also be a natural property - but a property directly of the term itself, rather than of the object or act referred to, whereas the IP is a natural property of the things denoted by the term".²¹

- 16) Prasad solves this problem by holding the thesis that ethical expressions like factual ones are descriptive, but that they are used for purposes of guiding the choice and action in moral situation. (Prasad, Rajendra, 'Evaluative, Factual and Referring Expressions', The Visva-Bharati Journal of Philosophy, Vol V, No 1, August 1968; pp 72-82.
- 17) Rice, Phillip Blaire, Rice On the Knowledge of Good and Evil, New York: Random House, 1955.
- 18) Ibid, p 13.
- 19) Ibid, p 120.
- 20) Ibid, pp 123-124.
- 21) Ibid, p 119.

Let me remark first that I will join William Frankena in asking the question, 'Why does Rice call this position naturalism rather than non-cognitivism?'²² It seems to me that Rice's position, in no way, can be called a naturalistic ethical position. It makes little difference whether you call MM a natural property of ethical language qua language so long as you make MM a part of the meaning of ethical expressions. And, if the MM, or as I call it, the prescriptive meaning, is made a part of the meaning of ethical expressions (which in Rice's terminology are terms that refer to certain naturalistic characteristics), then you, by that very fact, have injected into factual expressions some value character. This way of analysing prescriptive meaning of ethical expressions leads Rice to give value-neutral factual expressions a built-in value structure, such that, in effect, they cease to be value-neutral factual expressions. Merely calling the MM a natural property will not do. If Rice proposes a strictly naturalistic analysis of ethical expressions then, it is required of him to give us such analyses which themselves do not include any ethical element. But the analysis that Rice has given includes in the naturalistic analyses, the MM (which distinguishes an ethical expression from non-ethical ones) which itself is an ethical element. Hence, it must be said that Rice's theory fails to give a satisfactory naturalistic analysis of ethical expressions.

22) See Frankena, William K., 'Ethical Theory' in PHILOSOPHY, (Ed. Chisholm, and others), Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1964; pp 345-464; p417.

It remains only to add by way of a remark that other theories which propose to give naturalistic analyses of ethical expressions may also be shown to have failed in giving a satisfactory naturalistic account of the relation between the descriptive and prescriptive functions of ethical expressions.

It may be urged that the distinctive characteristic of ethical expressions, prescriptivity, is not a part of the meaning of ethical expressions, but that it is a property of the context in which such expressions are used.²³ In other words, prescriptivity is a function not of the linguistic acts themselves or the acts of uttering ethical judgements but of the context in which such utterances or linguistic acts are made. The ethical naturalist can take this line of defense. On this thesis, ethical judgements are wholly descriptive. But this thesis cannot be maintained successfully. For one thing, it goes against the common-sense conception of ethical judgement as action-guiding. For another thing, it is based on a doubtful assumption that there is a separation between a linguistic act and the context in which it is performed, such that you can understand the meaning or the logic of the linguistic act or expression in isolation from the context in which the act is done or the expression is uttered.

The point that I want to make is that in order to understand the meaning of any statement which functions prescriptively or descriptively one has to take into consideration

23) Edel, Abraham, Method in Ethical Theory, New York, 1963, p 152.

the context in which the statement is uttered.

I have tried to show in this chapter that ethical naturalism attempts to assimilate the logic of ethical expressions to the logic of factual expressions. If this assimilation per impossibile is somehow effected, then we cannot account for the action-guiding function of ethical expressions.

So far I have discussed ethical naturalism in general. In the subsequent chapters (4, 5, 6, and 7) I propose to examine critically some of the main forms of naturalistic ethical theory. I will begin with Mill's utilitarian naturalism.

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CHAPTER 4

MILL'S UTILITARIAN NATURALISM

I propose to discuss in this chapter the utilitarian ethical theory represented by John Stuart Mill. The theory has been traditionally considered to be unquestionably naturalistic. My analytical examination of this theory is intended to set it against G.E. Moore's conception of ethical naturalism. I have divided this chapter into three parts. Part I outlines Mill's utilitarian ethical theory as given in his A System of Logic (1843), and the Utilitarianism (1861-63). Part II discusses G.E. Moore's criticism of Mill's theory. In the part III I have examined Moore's criticism against Mill and also given my own criticism of Moore and Mill.

I would like to begin with the remark that Mill was not doing ethics from the logical point of view. Nor did he talk about the language of morals in the way in which a philosopher in the present times will do when he is talking about ethics. I will, therefore, have to reconstruct Mill's theory from the analytical point of view and then examine it. In this process, I may perhaps not be doing justice to Mill on some points, or perhaps unwittingly reading more into what he has said explicitly. With a view to avoiding both these pitfalls, my endeavour will be to support my analysis and to substantiate my claims as far as possible by giving readings from him.

Mill distinguishes moral knowledge from factual knowledge. Factual knowledge is expressed in assertions respecting matters of fact, and these assertions are in the indicative mood. Moral knowledge is different from factual knowledge in that it includes

"an inquiry the results of which do not express themselves in the indicative, but in the imperative mood, or in periphrases equivalent to it; what is called the knowledge of duties, practical ethics, or morality".¹

Moral knowledge, characteristically, is practical knowledge, or, as Mill calls it, it is an Art as distinguished from Science.

"...the imperative mood is the characteristic of Art, as distinguished from science. Whatever speaks in rules or precepts, not in assertions respecting matters of fact, is art".²

Again;

"Propositions of science assert a matter of fact; an existence, a co-existence, a succession, or a resemblance. The propositions of Art now spoken of do not assert that anything is, but enjoin or recommend that something should be. They are a class by themselves. A proposition of which the predicate is expressed by the words ought or should be is generally different from one which is expressed by is or will be." ³

The point that is brought out is that an ethical judgement is not the same as a factual judgement. The two are logically distinguishable. Ethics, being practical, its judgement is of the form of an imperative; while science, being factual, its judgement is expressed in the form of an assertion about some matter of fact. This distinction is made from the point of view of the function that the two sorts of judgements perform.

1) Mill, J.S., A System of Logic, Longmans, London. Reprinted in 1965; p 616.

2) Ibid, p 616.

3) Ibid, pp 619-620.

Mill recognizes the fact that an ethical judgement like any descriptive, factual assertion, may be said to assert something as a matter of fact. "The fact affirmed in them is, that the conduct recommended excites in the speaker's mind the feeling of approbation".⁴ In so far as an ethical judgement seems to assert something as a matter of fact, it may be said to be descriptive. But descriptivity is not the function of an ethical judgement qua ethical judgement. The ethical judgement qua ethical judgement is imperativel or action-guiding. Given a suitable context, almost any expression in our language may function ethically. The same set of linguistic symbols, for example, "To work for the social welfare is good", will be functioning differently in different contexts. In ethical contexts, it will function as an ethical judgement; and in non-ethical contexts, it will function as a descriptive, factual statement. Mill's characterization of ethical judgement is functional; that is to say, Mill characterizes a judgement ethical if and only if it functions ethically, not otherwise.

Finally, Mill must be accused of committing the naturalistic fallacy if he regarded ethical judgement qua ethical judgement to be descriptive of the speaker's having the feeling of approbation. For, it could then be asserted that Mill considered describing the feeling of approbation as a sufficient reason for making the ethical judgement function ethically; that is, as an imperative, or as a guide for the conduct of the moral agent. In other words, Mill would then be

④ Ibid, p 620.

charged of reasoning from the fact that 'Somebody has the feeling of approbation of some action' to the ethical assertion that therefore, 'That action is good', or that "that action ought to be done." And, this he could do only by identifying 'good' occurring in the ethical conclusion with the descriptive, factual expression 'having a certain feeling of approbation' occurring in the premiss. That is to say, he could do this only by committing the naturalistic fallacy.⁵ But Mill clearly and definitely denies this. He says;

"the speaker's approbation is no sufficient reason why other people should approve; nor ought it to be a conclusive reason even with himself. For the purposes of practice, every one must be required to justify his approbations; and for this there is need of general premiss, determining what are the proper objects of approbation and what the proper order of precedence among these objects".⁶

There is another way to distinguish an ethical judgement from a statement of fact. This may be done from the way the two sorts of judgements are verified. A factual judgement can be seen to be true or false because verifiable on the perceptual model of verification or as I have called it, in the alpha sense of 'verification'. As factual judgements

5) For an excellent criticism of those ethical theories which identify ethical expressions with the naturalistic (that is, descriptive, factual) expressions of the type 'having certain feeling of approval and disapproval', see Moore, G.E., *Ethics*, London, 1912; reprinted by the Oxford University Press in 1966; Chapter III, pp 39-67.

6) Mill, J.S., A System of Logic, Longmans, London; 1965; p 620.

are judgements about matters of fact, they

"may be the subject of a direct appeal to the faculties which judge of fact - namely, our senses, and our internal consciousness".⁷

An ethical judgement cannot be so verified, that is, verified in the alpha sense of verification either by way of observation or introspection. To verify an ethical judgement what procedure is to be employed I will discuss later when I talk about Mill's theory of the verification of ethical judgements.

Many ethical thinkers (Moore, for example) have interpreted Mill as having held that he defined ethical expressions in terms of utility, pleasure, or happiness. A careful reading of Mill's 'A System of Logic and the Utilitarianism' will convince the discerning reader that he gave no such theory. What Mill was concerned with is a theory of the criterion of judging actions to be right and wrong, good and bad. And, the criterion that he found out was the utility-principle. Thus throughout the two works, he talks of a test, a standard, a criterion of right and wrong:

"A test of right and wrong must be the means ... of ascertaining what is right or wrong, and not a consequence of having already ascertained it".⁸

Again,

"The happiness which forms the utilitarian standard of what is right in conduct is not the agent's own happiness but that of all concerned".⁹

Thus the utility or happiness principle, for him, is "the directive rule of human conduct"¹⁰, not a statement of definition of ethical expressions 'right' and 'good'.

7) Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, Everyman's Library, London: p32

8) Ibid, p 2.

9) Ibid, p 16.

10) Ibid, p 10.

Since Mill has nowhere given explicitly the definition of 'good' and 'right', the charge that Mill defined these ethical expressions can have validity only on condition that Mill, if he did not explicitly define ethical expressions, must have presupposed definitions of ethical expressions in terms of utility, pleasure, or happiness. In order to validate the thesis that Mill presupposed definitions of ethical expressions in terms of utility, pleasure, or happiness, the critic of Mill must prove the thesis that Mill adopted the deductive model of proof with respect to the utility or happiness principle which he holds to be the first principle of his ethical theory. I will shortly show that Mill did not adopt the deductive model of proof with respect to the utility principle, and further that he explicitly denied that such a deductive proof of the utility principle can be given.

There is a clear distinction in Mill between reasoning from rules to cases to which the rules apply, and reasoning to the rules or principles. The first type of reasoning is reasoning within the framework of some ethical theory; while the second type of reasoning is reasoning about the first principles of some ethical theory. These two types of reasoning are distinct, and Mill is quite clear of it. He says:

"In all branches of practical business, there are cases in which individuals are bound to conform their practice to a pre-established rule, while there are others in which it is part of their task to find or construct the rule by which they are to govern their conduct".¹¹

The first type of reasoning is exhibited in the case of a judge whose business wholly is to apply a rule to a specific

¹¹) Mill, J.S., A System of Logic, London, p 616.

case. His business is "wholly and exclusively one of ratiocination or syllogism"¹², that is, interpretation of a formula. In interpreting a formula, he has to decide whether or not a specific case falls within the range of applicability of that formula or rule. His reasoning in thus applying a rule to a specific case takes the form of a deductive argument of the syllogistic type. It involves the following:

- (1) An ethical rule which is relevant
- (2) A particular case which falls within the range of applicability of the rule
- (3) The conclusion as a result of application of (1) to (2).

Both (1) and (2) serve as premisses, (1) being the major premiss while (2) being the minor premiss. The conclusion follows from the premisses, and since one of the premisses is ethical, the conclusion is ethical. Here the logical relation between the premisses and the conclusion is that of deducibility; the whole argument can be stated in the form of an analytic proposition. This sort of reasoning takes place within any ethical theory the first principles of which are not questioned when these principles are being applied to specific cases. That is to say, reasoning within any ethical theory, according to Mill, is wholly of the deductive type; that is, given the first principles, one can go to specific cases, and the logical relation of the principles and the cases to the conclusion will be the relation of deducibility strictly.

A very important characteristic of this type of reasoning is that it goes, not from factual premisses to ethical conclusion,

12) Mill. J.S.. A System of Logic. London: p 616.

but from premisses at least one of which is ethical to ethical conclusion, such that when we reason in this way we do not have to define, in order to avoid fallacious reasoning, the ethical predicate occurring in the conclusion in terms of factual predicates. It is obvious, therefore, that Mill neither defines nor presupposes the definitions of ethical predicates in terms of factual predicates; for he does not have to do either sort of thing in the case of reasoning within any ethical system. The reasoning within it, by the nature of the case, assures that the reasoner is always reasoning from ethical premisses to ethical conclusion, and not from non-ethical, factual premisses to ethical conclusion.

With respect to reasoning about ethical rules or principles, however, the case is different. Mill compares this sort of reasoning with the reasoning in the case of a legislator whose part of his business is to find or construct rules by which to govern conduct. The legislator frames rules and maxims within the framework of a certain policy. Therefore, when he frames rules or principles he takes into account the reasons or grounds for them. Now

"the reasons of a maxim or policy, or of any other rule of art, can be no other than the theorems of the corresponding science".¹³

In other words, the reasons or grounds for the first principles of ethics must be some statements of science, that is, some empirical, factual statements. The relation of these factual statements to the first principles is not the relation of deducibility, for the simple reason that the logical status and function of ethical principles is different from the

the logical status and function of factual statements. The ethical principles are imperatives and they are not verifiable on the perceptual model of verification; whereas the statements of fact are both assertions and verifiable on the perceptual model of verification. The point is that the ethical principles belong to a logical type which is totally different from the logical type to which the statements of fact belong. The relation of analyticity or deducibility can obtain between premisses and conclusion belonging to the same logical type, not between premisses and conclusion belonging to two different types.

The relation between the rules or principles and the statements of fact cited as reasons or grounds for them is explicated by Mill in the following way: Ethics proposes an end to be attained and it defines the end. Science shows us whether the end thus proposed by ethics is or is not attainable by human effort. It also tells us what is required to achieve the end. Ethics, then, pronounces those actions which lead to the attainment of the desired end to be the right actions and those actions which frustrate the attainment of the desired end to be the wrong actions. Since the actions thus regarded to be the right actions for the attainment of the desired end are also practicable, ethics converts them into a rule or precept. This whole reasoning takes the following form;

13) Mill, J.S., A System of Logic, London; p 616.

- (1) The attainment of the given end is desirable
- (2) The performance of actions a, b, c will attain the end
- (3) Therefore, the performance of actions a, b, c is desirable.
- (4) Therefore, perform actions a, b, c.

(1) is an ethical principle, (2) a scientific or factual assertion, (3) an ethical judgement, and (4) is an ethical rule or precept.

Mill writes:

"The only one of the premisses, therefore, which Art supplies is the original major premiss, which asserts that the attainment of the given end is desirable. Science then lends the Art the proposition (obtained by a series of inductions or of deductions) that the performance of certain actions will attain the end. From these premisses Art concludes that the performance of these actions is desirable, and finding it also practicable, converts the theorem into a rule or precept."¹⁴

The grounds or reasons for any ethical principle, then, are to be found in theorems of science. These grounds or reasons function as grounds or reasons only in so far as they are related to or conditioned by the ends that are regarded to be desirable. A complete justification of moral rules, thus, requires two things together: (1) a statement of the desirable end to be attained, and (2) a statement of fact as to what is a means to the attainment of that desirable end. And, given these two things, the desirability of the action contemplated follows from them. It is apparent, therefore, that Mill nowhere is trying to deduce, as Moore accuses him of having done, an ethical judgement from a set of mere factual statements. For a full and complete justification of an ethical rule, Mill recognizes, there must be both a statement of the desirable end to be achieved and a statement of fact about the effective means for the achievement of the desirable end.

14) Ibid, p 617.

How about the statements of the desirable end, or as Mill calls them, "questions of ultimate ends"¹⁵? Can they be proved or disproved, or can reasons be given for or against them? Mill is very clear in his answer to this question. He says:

"Questions of ultimate ends are not amenable to direct proof. Whatever can be proved to be good, must be so by being shown to be a means to something admitted to be good without proof. The medical art [for example] is proved to be good by its conducing to health, but how is it possible to prove that health is good?"¹⁶

I will come later to Mill's answer to the question, What sort of proof the first principles of ethics are susceptible of? Let me first say what Mill has to say about the role of scientists and science on the questions of ultimate ends. Mill clearly denies that the scientist is of any use in deciding on the question of the desirable ends;

"But though the reasonings which connect the end or purpose of every art with its means belong to the domain of science, the definition of the end itself belongs exclusively to Art, and forms its peculiar province. Every art has one first principle, or general major premise, not borrowed from science; that which enunciates the objects aimed at, and affirms it to be a desirable object".¹⁷

Scientists can decide on the effective means to an end; but they cannot decide on the end itself. The end-part belongs strictly to morality, not to science.

"A scientific observer or reasoner, merely as such, is not an adviser for practice. His part is only to show that certain consequences follow from certain causes, and that to obtain certain ends, certain means are the most effectual. Whether the ends themselves are such as ought to be pursued, and if so, in what cases and to how great a length, it is no part of his business as a cultivator of science to decide, and science alone will never qualify him for the decision".¹⁸

15) Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, London; p 4.

16) Ibid, p 4.

17) Mill, J.S., A System of Logic, London; p 619.

18) Ibid, p 620.

Two things become apparent from the above discussion: One, from no amount of scientific or factual inquiry does either an ethical judgement or an ethical rule or principle follow. Ethical inquiry is independent of scientific or factual inquiry in that the first principles of ethics cannot be derived from any number of scientific or factual statements. Two, scientific or factual inquiry is not wholly irrelevant to ethical discussion; for, science enables us to decide on the question of the attainment of desirable ends that we have set to ourselves by human effort. Therefore, to accuse Mill of either deriving an ethical judgement or ethical rule or principle from a set of scientific or factual statements or even excluding the role of all science from any ethical inquiry - to accuse Mill of both these mistakes - betrays a careless study or gross misunderstanding on the part of the critic.

As in the case of his theory of ethical reasoning Mill's theory of justification of ethical judgement also may be discussed under two heads: (1) Justification of ordinary, specific, ethical judgements; and (2) justification of ethical rules or principles. Later I will consider Mill's answer to the question, 'Why should I be moral?' or, 'What is the justification of morality itself?

Justification of ordinary ethical judgements:-

I have said above that Mill rejects the perceptual model of verification of ethical judgements, or the alpha sense of 'verification'. He rejects the perceptual model of verification with respect to both the ordinary ethical judgements and

ethical principles. With regard to ordinary ethical judgement he says;

"the morality of an individual action is not a question of direct perception, but of the application of a law to an individual case".¹⁹

As an ordinary ethical judgement cannot be verified by perception, it can be verified (to avoid ambiguity and for the sake of simplicity, I will henceforth use the expression 'justification') or justified by showing that it follows from an application of an ethical rule or law or principle which comprehends it in its range of application. He says that this theory of justification of ethical judgements is held by both the intuitive and the inductive schools of ethics. The intuitive school holds that "the principles of morals are evident a priori, requiring nothing to command assent, except that the meaning of the terms be understood"²⁰. The inductive school holds that "right and wrong, as well as truth and falsehood, are question of observation and experience"²¹. For both these schools, there is a science of morals²². Both these schools recognize roughly the same moral laws, but differ as to their evidence and the source from which they derive their authority²³. In any case when it comes to the question of justifying ordinary judgements of ethics both these schools justify each one of such judgements by showing that it follows from an application of a rule or principle of ethics to a particular case. Reasoning in the case of this sort of justification takes the formal structure of argument as already discussed above²⁴.

19) Mill, J.S., The Utilitarianism, London; p 2; My italics.

20) Ibid, p 2.

21) Ibid, p 2.

22) Ibid, p 3.

23) Ibid, p 2.

24) Pp 80-82 of the present work.

Justification of ethical principles:-

Here, again, Mill rejects the perceptual model of verification. He distinguishes between the first principles of knowledge and those of conduct or ethics, and says that both the sorts of principles are incapable of proof. Yet there is this difference between them that

"the former, being matters of fact, may be the subject of a direct appeal to the faculties which judge of fact - namely, our senses, and our internal consciousness".²⁵

But, the principles of conduct or ethics cannot be so verified. The reason is that ethical principles belong to the logically distinct set of imperatives. Imperatives cannot be verified by appeal to empirical observation; only assertions about facts can be verified by appeal to empirical observation.

Nor can ethical principles be justified by deriving them by the ordinary rules of logic. For, it is they which are used to justify the ordinary ethical judgements or the lesser rules of ethics (i.e., rules of lesser generality) belonging to any ethical theory; they themselves cannot be justified within that ethical theory; for, everything within that ethical theory is justified by appeal to them.

Here, Mill very clearly makes a distinction often overlooked by his critics between justification within theory and justification of the theory itself. The utility principle is used to justify ethical judgements and ethical rules of lesser generality within the utilitarian ethical theory; the utility principle itself cannot be justified in the same way within the utilitarian ethical theory. Of the ordinary ethical judgements a deductive

25) Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, London; p 32.

justification or, as Mill calls it, proof, can be given but not of the utility principle itself. You can accept or reject the utility principle but in no condition can you give a deductive proof of the principle. For,

"Questions of ultimate ends are not amenable to direct proof. Whatever can be proved to be good, must be so by being shown to be a means to something admitted to be good without proof".²⁶

Further,

"questions of ultimate ends do not admit of proof in the ordinary acceptation of the terms. To be incapable of proof by reasoning is common to all first principles, to the first premisses of our knowledge, as well as to those of our conduct".²⁷

Again,

"If, then, it is asserted that there is a comprehensive formula, including all things which are in themselves good, and that whatever else is good is not so as an end, but as a means, the formula may be accepted or rejected, but is not a subject of what is commonly understood by proof".²⁸

A first principle of an ethical theory, or to be specific, the utility principle of the utilitarian ethical theory, may be accepted or rejected, but it is not a subject to what is commonly understood as proof. But, from this, Mill warns, we are not "to infer that its acceptance or rejection must depend on blind impulse or arbitrary choice ... The subject is within the cognizance of the rational faculty ... Considerations may be presented capable of determining the intellect either to give or withhold its assent to the doctrine, and this is equivalent to proof"²⁹. Mill adds;

"We do not know the Principle (of Utility) with our senses or intellect; but we can discuss conditions which make good the claim of the principle to be believed"³⁰.

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- 26) Ibid, p 4.
 - 27) Ibid, p 32.
 - 28) Ibid, p 4.
 - 29) Ibid, p 4.
 - 30) Ibid, p 32.

It is clear that Mill nowhere is attempting a deductive proof of the utility principle. To generalize; he nowhere holds that the first principles of ethics are capable of proof or disproof in the strict sense in which proof is equivalent to deductive proof. His claim is that the demand for a deductive proof of the first principles of ethics is impossible.

We can only ask, Why should we believe in the first principles? or, Why do we hold the first principles to be true? He writes;

"What ought to be required of this doctrine [i.e., the utility doctrine] - What conditions is it requisite that the doctrine should fulfil - to make good its claims to be believed?"³¹

The point that Mill seems to be making is that no cognitive but only pragmatic justification³² of the first principles of ethics is possible; the demand for a cognitive justification of the first principles is out of place.

Having explained what sort of 'proof' or justification of the first principles of ethics Mill is attempting, I will now state as far as possible in Mill's own words, the justification that he has put forth for the utility principle. This proof has been much criticised and condemned by most of the critics of Mill beginning with Henry Sidgwick and G.E. Moore. I do not attempt to give my own criticism of the proof here and now. That I will do later. let me first very clearly say what the proof is.

Having Mill's 'proof' of argument is two-tiered. He shows first, that pleasure, utility, or happiness is the end; and then, that happiness alone and nothing else than happiness

31) Ibid, p 32.

32) For an excellent discussion of the distinction between cognitive and pragmatic justification, see Feigl, Herbert,

is the end. I will quote from Mill extensively:

(1) The first part of the argument is as follows:-

"The only proof capable of being given that an object is visible is that people actually see it, the only proof that a sound is audible is that people hear it, and so of the other sources of our experience. In like manner, I apprehend the sole evidence it is possible to produce that anything is desirable is that people do actually desire it. If the end which the Utilitarian doctrine proposes to itself were not, in theory and in practice, acknowledged to be an end, nothing could ever convince any person that it was so. No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable desires his own happiness. This, however, being a fact, we have not only all the proof which the case admits of, but all which it is possible to require, that happiness is a good, that each person's happiness is a good to that person, and the general happiness therefore, a good to the aggregate of all persons".³³

(ii) This part of the argument shows only that "Happiness is one of the ends of conduct, and consequently one of the criteria of morality".³⁴ To show that happiness is the sole end of conduct Mill has to show not only that people desire happiness, but also that they never desire anything else.³⁵ So, the second part of his argument runs as follows: Happiness is the sole end; for all other ends, such as virtue, are either (a) means to, or (b) part of, happiness, which alone is the standard of approbation and disapprobation. In the case of (a), there is no problem. In the case of (b) things in being desired for their own sake, are desired as part of happiness. Take virtue and money for examples:

'De Principiis Non Disputandum ...? On the Meaning and the Limits of Justification', in Philosophical Analysis, ed. Max Black, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: 1963; pp 113-147.

33) Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, London; pp 32-33.

34) Ibid, p 38. 35) Ibid, p 38.

"virtue is not the only thing, originally a means, and which if it were not a means to anything else, would be and remain indifferent, but which by association with what it is a means to, comes to be desired for itself, and that too with the utmost intensity".³⁶

Similarly, money:

"From being a means to happiness, it has come to be itself a principal ingredient of the individual's conception of happiness. The same may be said of the majority of the great objects of human life".³⁷

What these two examples show is that what was a means once becomes a part of the end to which it was a means. "What was once desired as an instrument for the attainment of happiness, has come to be desired for its own sake. In being desired for its own sake, it is, however, desired as part of happiness".³⁸ Hence, Mill concludes:

"there is in reality nothing desired except happiness. Whatever is desired otherwise than as a means to some end beyond itself, and ultimately to happiness, is desired as itself a part of happiness, and is not desired for itself until it has become so".³⁹

Mill is fully aware of the fact that the second part of his argument is based on the contingent fact that "human nature is so constituted as to desire nothing which is not either a part of happiness or a means of happiness"⁴⁰.

36) Ibid, p 34.

37) Ibid, p 34.

38) Ibid, pp 34-35. Cf. Stevenson, C.L., Ethics and Language, London: Yale University Press; 1944; Chapter VIII (pp 174-205).

39) Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, London; p 35. Mill adds: "Life would be a poor thing, very ill provided with sources of happiness, if there were not this provision of nature, by which things originally indifferent, but conducive to, or otherwise associated with, the satisfaction of our primitive desires, become in themselves sources of pleasure more valuable than the primitive pleasures, both in permanency, in the space of human existence that they are capable of covering, and even in intensity".: Utilitarianism; p35. Also, compare this view with John Dewey's view on the question of means-end relationship.

40) Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, London; p 36.

Is this empirical assertion true of human psychology, or as Mill puts it 'psychologically true? He recognizes that this question is a question of fact and experience and that it can be decided only on the evidence of empirical data. It can only be determined by practised self-consciousness and self-observation, assisted by observation of others⁴¹. Mill's belief is that

"these sources of evidence that is, the sources comprehended under the name empirical observation impartially consulted, will declare that desiring a thing and finding it pleasant, aversion to it and thinking of it as painful, are phenomena entirely inseparable, or two parts of the same phenomenon - in strictness of language, two different modes of naming the same psychological fact; that to think of an object as desirable (unless for the sake of its consequences), and to think of it as pleasant, are one and the same thing; and to desire anything, except in proportion as the idea of it is pleasant, is a physical and metaphysical impossibility".⁴²

Hence, his conclusion is that

"Happiness is the sole end of human action, and the promotion of it the test by which to judge of all human conduct, from whence it necessarily follows that it must be the criterion of morality, since a part is included in the whole".⁴³

So far, I have stated Mill's argument or proof in his own words. Now, before I give Moore's criticism of Mill's argument, I must show the structure of Mill's argument so that the argument is not misunderstood.

Consider the first part of the argument. Throughout the argument we shall note that Mill uses the expressions 'desirable', 'end', '(something) ought to be attained' as synonymous expressions. We shall also note that the argument

41) Ibid, p

42) Ibid, pp 36-37.

43) Ibid, p 36.

is not intended to be a deductive argument; it only aims at presenting considerations which may determine the intellect to give its assent to the first principle of utilitarian ethics, the utility principle. The argument may be regarded as comprising of two stages:-

- 1) Something is desirable/is an end,
 because; people actually desire that thing/
 that thing is acknowledged to be desirable/
 that thing is known to be an end.

The force of the argument is that, from an empirical point of view, it is impossible to say that x is desirable, or that x ought to be desired, or that x can be desired, unless there is at least one person who has actually desired x, or acknowledged x to be an end, or known x to be desirable. To Mill's rhetorical question, 'Can you assert x to be an end unless you have already acknowledged x to be an end?' the answer clearly is, No; unless you allowed the assertion that there can be an end which can neither be desired nor acknowledged to be an end. To hold this latter position would amount to saying that an object is visible yet people cannot see it; or that a sound is audible yet people cannot hear it; a position which can be held by those who really do not see logic. What Mill is saying is only this;

- x is acknowledged to be an end/is desirable,
 Therefore, x is an end. (N.B.:- The argument is not deductive.)

- 2) General happiness is desirable/an end/ought to be attained,
 Because; Each person desires his own happiness/
 each person's happiness is a good to that person, and
 the general happiness is a good to the aggregate
 of all persons.

Put differently, the argument is:-

Each person's happiness is a good to that person.

Therefore, all persons' happiness (i.e., general happiness)
is a good to the aggregate of all persons.

Therefore, general happiness is desirable/an end/ought
to be attained.

Combining (α) and (β), the argument takes the following
form:-

- γ) (1) To assert that x is acknowledged to be an end/
desirable/something which ought to be attained
(2) is to assert that x is an end, &c.
(3) But, happiness is acknowledged to be an end, &c.
(4) Therefore, happiness is an end, &c.

Let us call this argument the gamma argument.

It should be noted that Mill is not giving us a deductive argument. The gamma argument shows only that happiness is an end. In the part (ii) of his argument, Mill attempts to show that happiness is the sole end. In this second part, his argument takes the following form:-

- δ) Thesis: Human nature is so constituted as to desire
nothing which is not either a part of
happiness or a means of happiness.

This is an empirical claim, and Mill clearly recognizes it to be so. Therefore, he says that to assert the truth of this psychological (empirical) claim, one has to use the methods of empirical observation. Mill claims that the methods of empirical observation show that human beings desire happiness and nothing else. Therefore, this empirical claim is true.

Let us call this argument from observation, the delta argument.

Now, combine the gamma argument with the delta argument and you get the thesis that happiness is the sole end. The argument takes the following form:-

- ε) (1) x is acknowledged to be an end, &c.
- (2) Therefore, x is an end, &c.
- (3) Happiness is acknowledged to be an end, &c.
- (4) Therefore, happiness is an end, &c.
- (5) Human nature is so constituted as to desire
nothing which is not either a part or a means
of happiness
- (6) Therefore, happiness is the sole end.

The argument is not a deductive argument. In the following sections, I will first state Moore's criticism of Mill, and then I will examine Moore's criticism. Later, I propose to examine Mill's theory independently.

II

Moore's Criticism of Mill:-

Moore's criticism of Mill, broadly, takes two forms: One, that Mill, in giving reasons for his first principle of ethics, namely, Happiness is the only thing desirable as an end, has confused 'desirable' which is an ethical predicate with 'desired' which is a descriptive, factual, predicate, and thus committed the naturalistic fallacy. Two, that Mill's empirical claim that 'nothing but pleasure or happiness is desired' is both (a) empirically false, because it is based on a confusion of the cause with the object of desire; and (b) contradicted by

his own admission that other things than pleasure are also desired. Moore points out that in his attempt to patch up the self-contradiction, Mill has confused means with ends by 'the absurd declaration that what is a means to happiness is 'a part' of happiness'⁴⁴.

There are two more arguments urged by Moore against Mill. One is designed to show that Mill's doctrine of 'difference of quality in pleasures' is inconsistent with his fundamental thesis that pleasure alone is good as an end⁴⁵. And the other argument is designed to show that his reasoning from the statement 'each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, desires his own happiness' to 'general happiness is desirable' logically leads Mill only to egoism, not to utilitarianism.⁴⁶

These are, roughly, all the objections raised by Moore against Mill. I do not propose to discuss all of them. For, it is not my office to defend Mill against Moore. My only objective is to show whether Mill as an ethical naturalist commits the fallacy called by Moore the naturalistic fallacy which Moore claims an ethical naturalist must commit if he is to be a naturalist in ethics. It is also a part of my objective to show how far Moore's conception of ethical naturalism fits in with the actual practice of the so-called ethical naturalists, particularly, Mill. I will therefore discuss only those objections which have a direct bearing on my objective. My method of doing this will not be polemical; what I will do is only to state and explain what Moore has to say against Mill and I will try to set this against what Mill actually

has said and done. My feeling is that Moore has totally misunderstood Mill, and that he would not have said things against Mill he has really said had he carefully read and correctly understood Mill's both the works (1) A System of Logic, and (2) Utilitarianism. I am not saying that Mill is wholly right and Moore is wholly wrong.

The method that Moore adopts for criticising Mill consists in exposing the reasons offered by Mill for the truth of the first principle of his ethical theory.⁴⁷ (I will presently say what that principle is.) Here I am concerned with Moore's method of criticising Mill. Moore writes:-

"I do not quarrel with them [i.e., the Hedonists whose one important representative is J.S. Mill] about most of their practical conclusions, I quarrel only with the reasons by which they seem to think their conclusions can be supported".⁴⁸

The reason why Moore is concerned with Mill's reasons for the first principles of ethics rather than with anything else can be found in Moore's own conception of a first principle. Right in his Preface to the Principia Ethica, Moore distinguishes between two questions; (1) What kind of things ought to exist for their own sake, or are good in themselves, or have

44) Moore, G.E., Principia Ethica, C.U.P. (1903); p. xvi.

45) Ibid, pp 77-81.

46) Ibid, pp 104-105.

47) Ibid, p. xvi.

48) Ibid, p 62.

intrinsic value? and (2) What kind of actions ought we to perform, or are right, or are duties? The first principles of ethics are answers to the first question. When asked exactly what kind of reasons are relevant as arguments for or against any particular answer to them, Moore's reply is:

"It becomes plain that, for answers to the first question, no relevant evidence whatever can be adduced; from no other truth, except themselves alone, can it be inferred that they are either true or false".⁴⁹

How about reasons for or against answers to the second question?

Here is Moore's answer:

"As for the second question, it becomes equally plain, that any answer to it is capable of proof or disproof - that, indeed, so many different considerations are relevant to its truth or falsehood, as to make the attainment of probability very difficult, and the attainment of certainty impossible".⁵⁰

The kind of evidence that is both necessary and also relevant to such answers can be exactly defined; "Such evidence must contain propositions of two kinds and of two kinds only; it must consist, in the first place, of truths with regard to the result of the action in question - of causal truths - but it must also contain ethical truths of our first or self-evident class. Many truths of both kinds are necessary to the proof that any action ought to be done; and in any other kind of evidence is wholly irrelevant".⁵¹ Here comes the crux of his method of criticising Mill and other ethical thinkers discussed in the Principia. He writes;

"It follows that, if any ethical philosopher offers for propositions of the first kind any evidence whatever, or if, for propositions of the second kind, he either fails to adduce both causal and ethical truths, or

49) Ibid, p. viii.

50) Ibid, p. viii.

51) Ibid, p. ix.

adduces truths that are neither, his reasoning has not the least tendency to establish his conclusions. But not only are his conclusions totally devoid of weight; we have, moreover, reason to suspect him of the error of confusion; since the offering of irrelevant evidence generally indicates that the philosopher who offers it has had before his mind, not the question which he professes to answer, but some entirely different one".⁵²

And, Moore's claim is that Mill, in fact, has offered a proof or reasons for the truth of the first principle of his ethical theory. In the course of my discussion, I will try to show that by 'reasons' Moore means 'deductive reasons', as premisses in a syllogistic argument are said to be 'reasons' for the conclusion of the argument. By 'proof' he means strictly 'deductive proof'; and by 'argument', strictly 'deductive argument. For the moment, I will request the indulgence of the reader to allow me to assume the truth of my thesis that Moore does use 'reason' as the logical equivalent of a deductive reasons or a reason which is both sufficient and necessary for the truth of that for which it is a reason.

Consider Moore's criticism that Mill has committed the naturalistic fallacy. The naturalistic fallacy consists in identifying an ethical predicate with a non-ethical or, to be specific, with a naturalistic predicate. Or, it consists in defining or analysing 'good' naturalistically. I have tried to show earlier ⁵³ that the fallacy will be committed by those only who have attempted to give us a definition of

52) Ibid, p. ix.

53) See the Chapter I of the present work.

of ethical expressions, or by those who have tried to analyse an ethical expression in terms of some naturalistic expressions. Has Mill done either of these two things? I have tried to show above⁵⁴ that Mill has not attempted a definition of 'good', he has not given us an analysis of 'good' or 'right' in terms of any naturalistic predicate. The first principle of his ethical theory that pleasure alone is good is not a statement of definition or of analysis of the expression 'good'; therefore, it is not an analytic statement or a tautology. This principle shows only that pleasure alone is desirable as an end; and hence, it is a significant ethical judgement. Nor is Mill saying when he says that pleasure alone is good that the word 'good' is used in such and such a way. Therefore, the statement is not a non-ethical statement about the meaning of the word 'good'. Moore is pretty well aware of this. But, his point against Mill is that Mill cannot have this principle that pleasure alone is good as the first principle of his ethical theory unless he has presupposed a definition of 'good', and thus committed the naturalistic fallacy. He says:

"I admit that, in order to suppose their [Millians'] arguments valid, they must have before their minds something other than the doctrine I have defined [that is, the doctrine which holds that 'Nothing is good but pleasure'], yet, in order to draw the conclusions that they draw, it is necessary that they should also have before their minds this doctrine. In fact, my justification for supposing that I shall have refuted historical Hedonism, if I refute the proposition 'Nothing is good but pleasure', is, that although Hedonists have rarely stated their principle in this form, and though its truth, in this form, will certainly not follow from their arguments, yet their ethical method will follow logically from nothing else".⁵⁵

54) Pp 79-80 of the present work.

55) Moore, G.E., Principia Ethica, C.U.P. (1903); p 61.

To prove this point, that Mill has presupposed a naturalistic definition of 'good' and thus committed the naturalistic fallacy, Moore considers the reasons that Mill has given for the first principle of his ethical theory. Mill's first principle of his ethical theory is that 'happiness is desirable, and the only thing desirable, as an end; all other things being only desirable as means to that end'⁵⁶. Moore points out that Mill, having stated the first principle, goes out to prove it by giving reasons. For one thing, this attempt to give a proof of the first principle goes against, that is, contradicts Mill's another principle that "questions of ultimate ends are not amenable to direct proof. Whatever can be proved to be good, must be so by being shown to be a means to something admitted to be good without proof"⁵⁷.

The first point which I wish to make is that Moore has completely misunderstood Mill. Mill makes a clear distinction between what can be proved or shown to be true within the framework of the utilitarian theory and what cannot be so proved or shown to be true within that theory. Mill makes it very explicit that the utility principle cannot be proved within the utilitarian theory; for it is the first principle of the theory, and the first principles of any theory either of knowledge or of conduct cannot be proved or disproved within that theory; you can only ask about them whether or not you should accept or reject them as true. The first principles are such as

56) Ibid, p. 65.

57) Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, London; p 32.

"may be accepted or rejected, but are not a subject of what is commonly understood by proof" ⁵⁸.

There is 'a larger meaning of the word proof'⁵⁹; and proof in this larger sense consists in giving rational considerations for accepting or rejecting the first principles. Mill says:

"Considerations may be presented capable of determining the intellect either to give or withhold its assent to the doctrine, and this is equivalent to proof"⁶⁰.

Moore, it is apparent, fails to see the difference between the two uses of the word 'proof', and consequently accuses Mill of giving the same sort of proof for the first principle as the one which can be given for ordinary ethical judgements, or judgements of lesser generality within the framework of the utilitarian theory.

Consider now the reasons that Mill gives for accepting the first principle of his ethical theory that happiness alone is good in itself. I have already shown the structure of his argument ⁶¹. Briefly the argument goes as follows:-

(1) Happiness is desirable/good in itself/end,

(2) because: people do actually desire it.

"There, that is enough", says Moore, "that is my first point. Mill has made as naive and artless a use of the naturalistic fallacy as anybody could desire. "Good", he tells us, means 'desirable', and you can only find out what is desirable by seeking to find out what is actually desired"⁶². What Moore is saying is that Mill has deduced logically the conclusion 'Happiness is desirable' from the premiss 'People do actually desire happiness'. Now, the conclusion is an

58) Ibid, p 32.

59) Ibid, p 4.

60) Ibid, p 4.

61) Pp 93-96 of the present work.

62) Moore, G.E., Principia Ethica, C.U.P. (1903); p 66.

judgement, while the premiss is factual. And, as Moore conceives it, the relation between the premiss and the conclusion here is the logical relation of analyticity with the immediate consequence that if the argument is to be held valid then it must also be held that the 'desired' in the premiss is identical with the 'desirable' in the conclusion. His point is that this identification of the 'desired' with the 'desirable' cannot be made. He warns that if we made this identification then we cannot give sense to such significant expressions as 'good' desires' or 'bad desires'. Such expressions show that what is desired may not be good inso facto, and good in proportion to the amount it is desired. In a word, 'desired' being factual is neutral with respect to value; it may be assigned either of the ethical values good or bad depending upon the point of view and the time and conditions of the argument.

Again, also "if the desired is inso facto the good, then good is inso facto the motive of our actions, and there can be no question of finding motives for doing it, as Mill is at such pains to do"⁶³. Moore adds;

"If Mill's explanation of 'desirable' be true then his statement that the rule of action may be confounded with the motive of it is untrue; for the motive of action will then be according to him inso facto its rule; there can be no distinction between the two, and therefore no confusion, and thus he has contradicted himself flatly".⁶⁴

III

Let me take up first the argument from the identification of the 'desired' with the 'desirable'. I will begin by asking,

⁶³) Ibid, p 67.

⁶⁴) Ibid, p 67.

Under what conditions can it be said that Mill has identified the 'desired' with the 'desirable'? I have indicated above that this can be said only if it is assumed that the relation between the premiss containing the 'desired' and the conclusion containing the 'desirable' is claimed by him to be the logical relation of analyticity. That is to say, where (2) is a 'reason' for (1) as premiss in a syllogistic argument is said to be a reason for its conclusion. This means, Moore is using 'reasons' as 'reasons which are both sufficient and necessary'. In other words, he is using 'reasons' as equivalent to 'deductive reasons', and the argument from (2) to (1) as a strictly deductive argument. And, this is precisely what Mill denies he is doing. Mill is denying that a strict proof of the utility principle can be given. He is even denying that we can ask for a strict proof of the first principles within the framework of the utilitarian theory. This means that he is denying very clearly the deductive relation between (1) and (2). It follows that Mill is not identifying the 'desired' with the 'desirable'.

The reasons of fact which Mill is putting forth for the utility principle are being put forth with the clear recognition of the fact that they are meant for ~~and~~ enabling the intellect to accept or reject the principle, not to prove that the principle is true. For, he holds, that for the truth or even falsity of the utility principle no reasons in the sense of reasons which are both sufficient and necessary can be given. My point is that Moore is not making

in the case of Mill the vital distinction between reasons for accepting or rejecting the first principles and reasons for or against the truth of the first principles. It is only as a result of failure to make this distinction in the case of Mill that he can accuse him of having identified the 'desired' with the 'desirable'. And, if it is shown (as I have tried to show that this really is the case) that Mill has not equated the 'desired' with the 'desirable', a factual predicate with an ethical predicate, then in no way can it be shown that Mill has committed the naturalistic fallacy which in effect consists in this sort of identification.

I have tried to show above that Mill has not argued deductively from the desiredness of something to its desirability; therefore, that he has not identified the 'desirable' with the 'desired'; and hence, he has not committed the naturalistic fallacy. I propose to show in this section that no better reason can be given for enabling the intellect that happiness is desirable than the one which Mill has actually given. I wish to draw the attention of the reader to the following:-

"The sole evidence it is possible to produce that anything is desirable is that people do actually desire it. If the end which the Utilitarian doctrine proposes to itself were not, in theory and in practice, acknowledged to be an end, nothing could ever convince any person that it was so. No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable desires his own happiness. This, however, being a fact, we have not only all the proof which the case admits of, but all which it is possible to require" 65

Let me analyse Mill's argument. It runs as follows:

65) Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, London; pp 32-33.

(1) Happiness is acknowledged to be an end, i.e.,
desirable,

(2) Therefore, happiness is an end, i.e., desirable.

My contention is that (1) is a reason for saying (2), though it is not a reason in the same sense in which premiss is a reason for the conclusion in a deductive argument. Considered as a deductive argument, it is fallacious; for Mill is arguing from 'is acknowledged to be an end' in (1) to 'is an end' in (2); and that this passage from known to be the case to is really the case is fallacious. For, what really is the case may not be known to be the case, and conversely, what is known to be the case may not really be the case. Mill, however, did not intend the argument to be deductive. To say, as Moore does, that the argument is fallacious, therefore, is not relevant to what Mill is saying.

Finally, Mill is often criticised for misconceiving the analogy between 'visible' and or 'audible' and 'desirable'. It is asserted by Moore, for example, that Mill fails to distinguish between the two uses of the 'desirable', namely, one in which the word is used for 'can be desired' and two in which it is used for 'ought to be desired'⁶⁶. That is to say, it is asserted that Mill has confused the ethical sense of the 'desirable' with the non-ethical sense of it. (For my comments on this point, see p. 94 of the present work).

Consider now Moore's point that (1) by identifying the 'desired' with the 'desirable' Mill himself has (2) confounded the motive of action with the rule of action, a distinction which he so carefully made⁶⁷. The validity of the point (2)

⁶⁶) Moore, G.E., Principia Ethica, C.U.P. (1903); p 67.

⁶⁷) Mill, J.S., Utilitarianism, London; p 17.

is contingent upon the validity of the point (1) that Mill has not distinguished the 'desired' from the 'desirable'. I have shown above that the point (1) is not valid; therefore, it is inso facto shown that the point (2) also is not valid.

To sum up: After having stated and explained Mill's position I discussed independently Moore's criticism of Mill. I pointed out that Moore misunderstood Mill quite a lot, that Mill clearly distinguished ethical from factual expressions, that he did not commit the naturalistic fallacy either by identifying ethical with factual expressions, or by deducing logically ethical conclusions from factual premisses. The examination of Mill's ethical theory brings out the following points which have a direct bearing on my thesis:-

(1) Moore's conception of ethical naturalism as a theory which must commit the naturalistic fallacy is too restrictive to include the traditionally known ethical naturalists like Mill.

(2) The ethical naturalist in order to be an empiricist in ethical theory is not required to hold the thesis that ethical judgements have the same logical status with factual statements. This result will at once exclude the attempts made by some ethical thinkers at assimilating ethical judgements to the class of descriptive, factual statements which, as these thinkers are prone to hold, must have a referent in order to be verifiable empirically.

(3) From (2) above, it also follows that the perceptual model of analysing and verifying ethical judgements is absolutely inapplicable to ethical judgements, and that in the case of

ethical judgements we can ask for verification in the beta sense of 'verification' only, as explained by me in the chapter three of the present work. In fact, 'justification' is more an adequate expression in the case of ethical judgements than the inadequate and misleading vocabulary of 'verification'.

(4) Finally it is shown that factual statements can always be used as reasons for ethical judgements, but only within a certain ethical framework. That is to say, whenever we make an ethical judgement, we can use factual statements as reasons for it, but in doing so, we never go outside the ethical point of view.

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CHAPTER 5

SPENCER'S EVOLUTIONISTIC NATURALISM

I propose to discuss in this chapter Herbert Spencer's ethical theory as given in his book, The Principles of Ethics, Volumes I & II (1892-1893). G.E. Moore has criticised this theory as naturalistic and discussed it in his Principia Ethica, Chapter II. My plan of discussion is as follows: First, I will outline Spencer's theory by organising it from the analytical point of view. Secondly, I will state Moore's criticism of it as a naturalistic theory of ethics. Finally, I will examine Moore's criticism and also give my own assessment of Spencer's theory.

It is to be remembered that Bentham, Mill, and Spencer were not doing ethics from the contemporary, logical, point of view. Hence, they, with one exception of J.S. Mill, may not have discussed such contemporary problems in ethical theory as the distinction between the logical behaviour of ethical and non-ethical expressions (words and sentences), the relation between premisses and conclusion of an ethical argument, the verification of ethical judgements, the justification of ethical principles, and the like. Therefore, it becomes necessary to reconstruct the ethical theories of these thinkers from the contemporary, analytical, point of view, and thus place them in a new perspective. I tried to do this sort of thing in the case of J.S. Mill's ethical theory; but in his case the job was not so difficult; for,

Mill himself was a logician. His account of the logical behaviour of ethical expressions and the nature of ethical argument is surprisingly modern in tenor. When, however, I come to discuss Herbert Spencer from the analytical point of view, my job becomes more difficult. I will try to be faithful to Spencer in outlining his theory by allowing him to speak for himself wherever and whenever necessary.

It is important at the outset to draw the distinction which Spencer himself has emphasized between his own rational utilitarianism and Mill's empirical utilitarianism. My reason for giving the importance to this distinction is Moore's criticism of Spencer that he is confused with respect to the first principles of his ethical theory.¹ Now, both the theories hold pleasure or happiness to be the sole good or the ultimate principle of morality. We have already seen how, for Mill, pleasure is the sole good. For Spencer also "the good is universally pleasurable".² That both Mill and Spencer hold pleasure to be the ultimate good is clear from the common name 'utilitarianism' they have accepted for their ethical theories. Again, both Mill and Spencer are anti-intuitionists. We have already seen Mill's anti-intuitionism. That Spencer shares the same anti-intuitionist attitude is clearly reflected in the following passage:

"The unavoidable conclusion is, then, that the intuitionist does not, and cannot ignore the ultimate derivation of right and wrong from pleasure and pain. However much he may be guided, and rightly

1) Moore, G.E., Principia Ethica, C.U.P. (1903), pp 51 f.

2) Spencer, Herbert, The Principles of Ethics, Vol. I; p30. In subsequent references to Spencer's work, the abbreviation 'Spencer's Principles' with volume number will be used in the present work.

guided, by the decisions of conscience respecting the characters of act; he has come to have confidence in these decisions because he perceives, vaguely but positively, that conformity to them furthers the welfare of himself and others, and that disregard of them entails in the long run suffering on all. Require him to name any moral-sense judgement by which he knows as right, some kind of act that will bring a surplus of pain, taking into account the totals in this life and in any assumed other life, and you find him unable to name one; a fact proving that underneath all these intuitions respecting the goodness or badness of acts, there lies the fundamental assumption that acts are good or bad according as their aggregate effects increase men's happiness or increase their misery".³

The point of difference between the two utilitarian theories lies in the fact, as Spencer view it, that Mill's utilitarianism is characterized either by entire absence of the idea of causation or by inadequate mention of it. Most probably, it is characterized by the latter. The empirical utilitarianism asserts, on grounds of induction, that causal relationship holds good in conduct to the effect that such and such mischiefs or benefits do go along with such and such acts and that the like relation will hold in future. That is to say, it asserts that "when in sufficiently numerous cases, it has been found that behaviour of this kind works evil while behaviour of that kind works good, these kinds of behaviour are to be judged as wrong and right respectively"⁴. Thus the empirical utilitarianism partially accounts for the origin of moral rules, but it does not make causation in conduct as forceful as the rational utilitarianism does. Rational utilitarianism, however, asserts more emphatically the role of causation in conduct, and thinks it to be more forceful and rigorous than the empirical utilitarianism does. It is for this reason that Spencer thinks that "the empirical utilitarianism is but a transitional form to

be passed through on the way to rational utilitarianism"⁵.

He writes;

"the utilitarianism which recognizes only the principles of conduct reached by induction, is but preparatory to the utilitarianism which deduces these principles from the processes of life as carried under established conditions of existence".⁶

For "if there are causal relations between acts and their results, rules of conduct can become scientific only when they are deduced from these causal relations ...".⁷

The point which is exhibited by this distinction is that Spencer's ethical theory, strictly speaking, is utilitarian, with its fundamental principle being that pleasure, happiness, or utility is the ultimate good. The only difference between it and Mill's is that it is more rigorous in giving a scientific treatment or foundation to the rules of ethics within the utilitarian framework. Spencer says;

"moral rules ... may be established by induction from [the] observed consequences [of actions done by individuals and societies]".⁸

"Actions are called good or bad according as they are or are not conducive to "general good, or welfare or utility".⁹

And whether or not they actually do so can be known from experience. Again,

"Morality properly so called - the science of right conduct - has for its object to determine how and why certain modes of conduct are detrimental, and certain other modes beneficial. These good or bad results

3) Spencer's Principles, Vol 1; p 40.

4) Ibid, p 56.

5) Ibid, p 57.

6) Ibid, p 61.

7) Ibid, p 58.

8) Ibid, p 51.

9) Ibid, p 53.

cannot be accidental, but must be necessary consequences of the constitution of things; and I conceive it to be the business of Moral Science to deduce, from the laws of life and the conditions of existence, what kinds of action necessarily tend to produce happiness, and what kinds to produce unhappiness. Having done this, its deductions are to be recognized as laws of conduct; and are to be conformed to irrespective of a direct estimation of happiness and misery".¹⁰

With these remarks, I now proceed on to Spencer's theory of the meaning of ethical expressions.

Spencer's Theory of the Meaning of Ethical Terms:-

(i) Consider first the method which Spencer employs for determining the meanings of 'good' and 'bad'. It consists in comparing the meanings of a word in different connections and observing what they have in common. If the word has several applications, then we learn the 'essential' meaning of a word by comparing with one another those applications of it which diverge most widely. He says;

"By comparing its meanings in different connexions and observing what they have in common, we learn the essential meaning of a word; and the essential meaning of a word that is variously applied, may best be learnt by comparing with one another those applications of it which diverge most widely".¹¹

(ii) Spencer critically surveys the various uses of the words 'good' and 'bad' in both ethical and non-ethical contexts.

This survey leads him to arrive at the following results:-

(1) In non-ethical contexts to say that something is good or bad is to say that it is "good or bad according as it is well or ill adapted to achieve prescribed ends".¹² Similarly, we class human actions (which are ethically indifferent) as good or bad according to their success or failure.¹³

10) Ibid, p 57.

11) Ibid, p 21;

12) Ibid, p 21.

13) Ibid, p 22.

In all such cases "the characters here predicated by the words 'good' and 'bad' are not intrinsic characters; for apart from human wants, such things have neither merits nor demerits"¹⁴.

(2) In ethical contexts, that is, in relation to conduct in its ethical aspects, 'good' and 'bad' are used in the sense of means, such that to say that something or some action is ethically good is to say that it is a means to an end adopted from the ethical point of view. This result also is arrived at by observing various uses of 'good' and 'bad' in ethical contexts. He says:

"Here, too, observation shows that we apply them [i.e., the words 'good' and 'bad'] according as the adjustments of acts to ends are, or are not, efficient".¹⁵

His conclusion, therefore, is that all our utterances of approval and disapproval "make the tacit assertion that, other things being equal, conduct is right or wrong according as its special acts, well or ill adjusted to special ends, do or do not further the general end of self-preservation".¹⁶ This conclusion is based on his observation of the various uses of the words 'good' and 'bad' in ethical contexts.

(iii) There may be cases in which someone may judge an action A to be good and some other person may judge the same action A to be bad. These cases may be characterized as cases of disagreement or inconsistent use of the words 'good' and 'bad'. Such cases of disagreement or inconsistent use of 'good' and 'bad' can be dealt with by arranging the

14) Ibid, p 21.

15) Ibid, p 22.

16) Ibid, p 23.

various orders of ends in a hierarchy. For, "actions well-fitted to achieve ends of one order may prevent ends of the other orders from being achieved".¹⁷

Spencer distinguishes three orders of ends: (a) welfare of self, (b) welfare of offspring, and (c) welfare of fellow-citizens. Considered each of these three ends separately, "the conduct which achieves each kind of end is regarded as relatively good; and is regarded as relatively bad if it fails to achieve it".¹⁸

Similarly, Spencer distinguishes between various levels (three levels) at which actions could be judged to be good or bad: (a) the level of self, (b) the level of the others within any species, and (c) the level of the interspecies. The criteria of judging actions at all these three levels are outlined as follows:-

(a) At the level of the individual or the self, "conduct is right or wrong according as its special acts, well or ill adjusted to special ends, do or do not further the general end of self-preservation."¹⁹

(b) At the level of the others within any species, or the species, acts are good or bad according as they are efficient or inefficient in achieving "the special ends which ought to be fulfilled, the furthering of the vital functions, with a view to the general end of continued life and growth".²⁰

(c) Finally, at the level of the interspecies, the criteria of good and bad conduct are "not preventing others

17) Ibid, p 22.

18) Ibid, p 24.

19) Ibid, p 24.

20) Ibid, p 24.

from achieving their ends, and helping others positively in achieving their ends".²¹ Hence the conclusion:

"Always, then, acts are called good or bad, according as they are well or ill adjusted to ends; and whatever inconsistency there is in our uses of the words, arises from inconsistency of the ends".²²

And, the inconsistency can be removed by distinguishing the various orders of ends and regarding the conduct to which we apply the name good, to be the relatively more evolved conduct, and the conduct to which we apply the name bad, to be the relatively less evolved conduct. The best conduct fulfills all the three classes of ends simultaneously. Thus,

"the conduct called good arises to the conduct conceived as best, when it fulfills all three classes of ends at the same time"²³.

The criterion of judging conduct to be good or bad, so far given, is given by Spencer in terms of more evolved and less evolved conduct. Thus, the more evolved conduct is called good conduct and the less evolved conduct is called bad conduct. Two things must be remembered; (1) that Spencer is not defining 'good' in terms of the more evolved, and 'bad' in terms of the less evolved conduct. That is to say, he is not saying that the more evolved conduct is the equivalent of good conduct; or that the less evolved conduct is the equivalent of bad conduct. Nor is he identifying the meaning of 'good' or 'bad' with the more evolved or the less evolved. What he is asserting is only this that in order to say that certain conduct is good, you have to use

21) Ibid, p 24.

22) Ibid, p 25.

23) Ibid, p 26.

the criterion of evolution. Spencer's theory, thus, offers a criterion of judging conduct as good or bad, and not a definition of 'good' or 'bad'.²⁴

(2) The second thing to be kept in mind is the criterion of evolved conduct. Spencer lays down three criteria of evolved conduct corresponding to the three levels or orders of conduct; (i) the individual level, (ii) the species level, and (iii) the interspecies level. 'Conduct', by definition, at all these three levels is 'acts adjusted to ends' or 'the adjustment of acts to ends'.²⁵ This definition of conduct excludes the behaviour which does not involve ends and adjustment of acts to those ends. In order to judge whether conduct at the individual level is evolved, we have to use the following two criteria:-

- (a) improved adjustment of acts to more numerous ends;
- (b) increased duration of life which constitutes the supreme end.

He says;

"Each further evolution of conduct widens the aggregate of actions while conducing to elongation of it".²⁶

At this level, the final purpose or end is complete individual life. Therefore, "length of life is not by itself a measure of evolution of conduct, but that quantity of life must be taken into account".²⁷

Conduct at the level of the species:- Here, the final purpose is the life of the species. This level cannot be separated from the level of the individual. For, "self-preservation in each generation has all along depended on

24) Ibid, p. Here makes a distinction between 'meaning' and 'criteri'. For an illuminating account of his distinction, see his book The Language of Morals, O.U.P. (1952); pp 94-110.

25) Ibid, p. Spencer's Principles, Vol. I; p 5. 26) Ibid, p 15.

27) Ibid, p 14.

the preservation of offspring by preceding generations".²⁸
 "The conduct which furthers race-maintenance evolves hand in hand with the conduct which furthers self-maintenance. That better organisation which makes possible the last, makes possible the first also".²⁹ Hence, the criteria for judging the conduct of the species as evolved remain the same as those of the individual level.

Conduct at the level of the interspecies:- The more evolved conduct at this level assumes the more evolved conduct at the first two levels. There are two criteria of the more evolved conduct at this level:-

(a) Negatively, adjustments of each creature are made without preventing them from being made by other creatures. When this condition in conjunction with (b) below is satisfied, the conduct is judged to be perfectly evolved conduct. Not otherwise. For, "conduct remains imperfectly evolved in proportion as there continue antagonisms between the groups and antagonisms between members of the same group - the two traits necessarily associated".³⁰ Thus each species achieving their ends without preventing other species from achieving their ends is the negative condition of the highest evolved conduct.

(b) Positively, each species may give mutual help in the achievement of ends. "And if, either indirectly by industrial cooperation, or directly by volunteered aid, fellow citizens can make easier for one another the adjustments of acts to ends, then their conduct assumes a still higher phase

28) Ibid, p 15.

30) Ibid, pp 18-19.

29) Ibid, p 16.

of evolution; since whatever facilitates the making of adjustments by each, increases the totality of the adjustments made, and serves to render the lives of all more complete".³¹

To sum up; Spencer does not give us a definition of ethical expressions, but only the criterion of judging conduct as good and bad. The criterion of judging conduct is formulated in terms of the more evolved or the less evolved conduct, the assumption being that the perfectly evolved conduct is the end. In order to judge conduct as good and bad we have to see whether it is more or the less evolved. If the latter, it is judged to be bad; if the former, it is judged to be good. Now there is a set of criteria to tell the more evolved from the less evolved. The criteria are: One, each species achieving their ends without preventing other species from achieving their ends; and two, each species giving mutual aid and cooperation in the achievement of ends. Using these criteria, one can determine whether a certain conduct is more or the less evolved.

I have said above that the fundamental principle of ethics, according to Spencer, is the principle of utility, pleasure, or happiness. For him, happiness alone is the supreme end. Now, if happiness is the ultimate end, then, as Mill did, the same end can also be said to be the criterion of judging conduct as good or bad. But, Spencer appears to be both doing this and also not doing this.³² I propose to show in this section how Spencer conceives the relation between

31) Ibid, p 19.

32) Cf. Moore, G.E., Principia Ethica, C.U.P. (1903); pp 49-54.

the evolution criterion and the happiness principle. Later, towards the last part of this chapter, I will discuss whether or not Spencer's conception of the relation is satisfactory from the logical point of view; or, what it is that he had in mind when he gave us the criterion of good and bad which apparently is thought to be independent of his avowedly fundamental principle of ethics.

Let me begin by asking the question, What reasons, on Spencer's theory, can be given for any ethical judgement? There are two types of reasons which can be and must be given for any ethical judgement:-

- α) Conduciveness to the maintenance of the species
- β) Conduciveness to the prosperity or happiness of the species.

Both (α) and (β) reasons are sufficient for the justification of any ethical judgement. In fact, both taken together constitute the justification of any ethical action. And, Spencer's claim is that (α) requires (β); for, he says, "when the race maintained is a recipient of happiness, maintenance of it ceases to be a desideratum"³³. He calls both (α) and (β) to be the 'ultimate sanctions' of any ethical action. What is the meaningⁿ of 'requires' here? Logically of course (α) does not require (β). He seems to be saying that (α) is a criterion of any ethical judgement but that (α) itself requires a justification and that this justification is provided for by (β), such that within the framework of his ethical theory, in asserting (α), you are implicitly asserting (β) also. He says;

33) Spencer's Principles, Vol II, p 330.

"Thus, there is no escape from the admission that in calling good the conduct which subserves life, and bad the conduct which hinders or destroys it, and in so implying that life is a blessing and not a curse, we are inevitably asserting that conduct is good or bad according as its total effects are pleasurable or painful".³⁴

And, again;

" [Excluding people who are] beyond or beneath argument, we find that all others avowedly or tacitly hold that the final justification for maintaining life, can only be the reception from it of a surplus of pleasurable feeling over painful feeling; and that goodness or badness can be ascribed to acts which subserve life or hinders life, only on this supposition".³⁵

Or,

"...if we call good the conduct conducive to life, we can do so only with the implication that it is conducive to a surplus of pleasures over pains".³⁶

It is apparent that Spencer uses the utility, pleasure, or happiness principle in justification of the criterion of evolution. In fact, the logical structure of his ethical theory, which is three-tiered, requires it. It is three-tiered because it consists of:

- (1) ethical judgement
- (2) intermediary ethical criterion (namely, the evolutionistic thesis)
- (3) the fundamental principle of ethics (namely, the utility thesis).

In justification of (1), he uses (2), and in justification of (2), he uses (3). Or, in justification of (1) he uses (2) in conjunction with (3). In all ordinary cases of ethical judgement, the use of (2) is sufficient for all practical purposes. For, in asserting (2), you are implicitly

34) Ibid, Vol I, p 28.

35) Ibid, pp 29-30.

36) Ibid, p 45.

asserting (3) also. I will shortly show why Spencer gives us the intermediary principle of ethics, namely, the evolutionistic thesis. Let me first try to show how Spencer justifies the utility thesis.

Spencer gives two arguments for holding the utility principle. The first argument is an argument from an examination of the existing standards of ethical judgement; and the second is from the ordinary usage of the words 'good' and 'bad'. Thus:

"The truth that conduct is considered by us as good or bad, according as its aggregate results, to self or others, or both, are pleasurable or painful, we found on examination, to be involved in all the current judgements on conduct. The proof being that reversing the applications of the words creates absurdities. And we found that every other proposed standard of conduct derives its authority from this standard. Whether perfection of nature is the assigned proper aim, or virtuousness of action, or rectitude of motive, we saw that definition of the perfection, the virtue, the rectitude, inevitably brings us down to happiness, experienced in some form, at some time, by some person, as the fundamental idea".³⁷

"May, if there be any who believe that human being were created to be unhappy and that they ought to continue living to display their unhappiness for the satisfaction of their creator, such believers are obliged to use this standard of judgement; for the pleasure of their diabolical god is the end to be achieved".³⁸

"So that no school can avoid taking for the ultimate moral aim a desirable state of feeling called by whatever name - gratification, enjoyment, happiness. Pleasure, at some time, to some being or beings, is an inexpugnable element of the conception".³⁹

Both these arguments are aimed at showing the authority of the utility principle, the grounds on which the utility principle may be accepted or adopted as the ultimate standard of all ethical judgement. These two arguments, therefore, in no way

37) Ibid, p 45.

38) Ibid, p 46.

39) Ibid, p 46.

constitute reasons, in the sense in which premiss of a syllogistic argument is said to be the reason for its conclusion. They tend to show only the grounds on which the utility principle can be held to be true. The most fundamental or the first principles of ethical theory, as of any theory whatsoever, cannot be proved or disproved deductively within the framework of the theory itself.

Spencer's theory of ethical reasoning:-

(1) With respect to the fundamental principles of ethics, I have earlier tried to show that Spencer denies that there is the logical relation of deducibility between the reasons given for holding the utility principle to be true and the principle itself. The most you can do with respect to a first principle is to give reasons for accepting or adopting it; but no reasons can be given for its truth or falsity. Rather, it is only with reference to the first principle that, within the framework of the first theory, rules of lesser generality, or specific judgements of ethics, can be shown to be true or false.

The perceptual model of verification of ethical principles, ethical rules of lesser generality, or even ordinary, individual, ethical judgements, is foreign to Spencer's way of ethical thinking. Mill, being a logician, paid attention to the problem of verification of ethical principles and ethical judgements, and therefore, he explicitly denied that ethical verification of principles is of the perceptual mould; rather it is of the justificatory type.

Spencer takes for granted Mill's thesis of ethical verification, and he therefore, leaves the problem undiscussed.

Nor again does Spencer discuss the nature of ethical judgement vis a vis factual statements. Only at one place, does he remark that the function of ethical judgement is the right regulation of conduct. That is to say, it is action-guiding judgement.⁴⁰ He assumes tacitly that the perceptual model with respect to the logical status, function, or verification is wholly inadequate for ethical judgement.

(ii) Ethical Rules:- I have said above that ethical rules (which are of lesser generality than ethical principles) can be justified within the framework of the fundamental principles of ethics, by the utility principle. According to Spencer, 'The more evolved conduct is good or right', and 'The less evolved conduct is bad or wrong' are such rules. Three problems need discussion here;

- (a) How to decide which conduct is more evolved, and which conduct is less evolved?
- (b) Does the more evolved conduct produce more happiness than the less evolved conduct?
- (c) On what grounds can we say that the more evolved conduct is right or good, and that the less evolved conduct is wrong or bad?

Consider (a) first. The question, How to decide which conduct is more evolved, and which conduct is less evolved? is a question which can be decided by the scientist by way of an empirical inquiry. He has to observe certain characteristics

40) Spencer's Principles, Vol II; p. vi.

of the conduct concerned by doing field work, and then arrive at a decision by inductive generalization that such and such characteristics generally go with the more evolved conduct and that the less evolved conduct lacks them. An empirical inquiry of this kind is in no way an ethical inquiry. For, in order to determine which conduct is more evolved and which conduct is less evolved, no ethical judgement, e.g., whether or not the more evolved conduct is good and the less evolved conduct is bad, is required.

Secondly consider (b). This question again is one which is decidable by purely empirical inquiry. The scientist's answer to this question will not enable us to decide whether the more evolved conduct which produces more happiness is better conduct than that the less evolved conduct which produces less of it. The question whether the happiness-producing conduct is good or bad is an ethical question, and therefore, it falls outside the purview of scientific inquiry.

Finally consider (c). This question strictly speaking is an ethical question. For, it is decidable not by an empirical inquiry, as it was possible in the case of (a) and (b), but by a strictly ethical inquiry. That is to say, this question can be decided only within the framework of some ethical theory. And, when an utilitarian like Spencer has to decide this question, he must decide it by reference to the fundamental principle of the utilitarian theory. On Spencer's theory, the decision-procedure for deciding whether or not the more evolved conduct is good requires an answer to the question whether or not the utility, or happiness principle comprehends in its fold the more evolved

conduct which produces happiness. If it is found out that it does so comprehend, then the more evolved conduct is good; otherwise not. Hence, reasoning in this case will take the following argument-form;

- (A) (1) Any happiness-producing conduct is good
- (2) The more evolved conduct is more happiness-producing than the less evolved conduct
- (3) Therefore, the more evolved conduct is better than the less evolved conduct.

Alternatively, the following;

- (B) (1) Happiness is good
- (2) Any conduct which produces happiness is good
- (3) The more evolved conduct is happiness-producing
- (4) Therefore, the more evolved conduct is good.

Both (A) and (B), logically speaking, are of the same general logical form;

- (C) (1) If x produces happiness, then x is good,
- (2) But x does produce happiness,
- (3) Therefore, x is good.
- (D) (1) $x = \text{Val}(H)$
- (2) and $x = y$,
- (3) Therefore, $y = \text{Val}(H)$.

Clearly, the reasoning pattern of both (C) and (D) is analytical; the conclusion does not contain more than what is already contained in the premisses. It follows that the logical relation between the premisses and the conclusion in such an argument is the logical relation of analyticity. The point that I want to make is that the logical relation between the reasons given for saying that the more evolved conduct is good is the logical relation of analyticity. The argument pattern

is strictly deductive. In an argument of this form you are arguing within the ethical framework of the utility, or happiness principle. The premisses are strictly ethical; therefore, the conclusion is ethical. It is not the case here that you have the value-neutral factual premisses and you are going from such premisses to an ethical conclusion, the sort of passage or transition which is logically forbidden. I take it to have been shown, therefore, that ethical rules can be justified within the ethical framework of any given theory and that when this sort of situation obtains, the argument pattern is strictly deductive, the logical relation between the justifying reasons and the justified ethical conclusion being the logical relation of analyticity.

(iii) Reasoning about ordinary, individual, ethical judgements:- Here also as in the case of (ii) above, on Spencer's theory, the reasons which we give in justification of our ordinary, individual, ethical judgements take the form of deductive reasoning, such that the relation between the justifying reasons and the justified ethical conclusion is the logical relation of analyticity, with the result that we never go outside ethical evidence while we are engaged in reasoning about our ordinary ethical judgements. Notwithstanding this, there is one small difference between the reasoning in the case of (ii) and (iii), the difference consisting in the complexity of (iii). This difference may be shown in the following concrete argument:-

- (E) (1) Happiness is good
 (2) The more evolved conduct produces happiness
 (3) Therefore, the more evolved conduct is good
 (4) Helping my needy friend is a case of the more evolved conduct
 (5) Therefore, helping my needy friend is good.

In (E) above, (1) is the fundamental principle, (2) an empirical proposition, (3) an ethical rule, (4) is an application of the rule to a specific case, and (5) the ethical conclusion. The formal structure of the above is exhibited as follows:

- (F) If x is an instance of evolved conduct which is happiness-producing, then x is good, and
 x is an instance of evolved conduct which is happiness producing,
 Therefore, x is good.

To sum up; Spencer in his theory of ethical reasoning, does not go from a set of value-neutral, factual premisses to an ethical conclusion; on the contrary, he always and everywhere has permitted only ethical evidence for ethical conclusion.⁴¹

While reading Spencer, a question has constantly bothered me as to why Spencer lays down as the criterion of good the evolutionistic principle which he could very well have done without, because like Mill he could have only maintained that happiness or utility alone is the criterion of good.

41) I have used the expression 'ethical evidence' to include any empirical evidence in conjunction with at least one ethical judgement of high generality so as to entail an ethical conclusion.

This question puzzled Moore so much that he, without much ado, projected this puzzlement over Spencer himself and remarked that "Mr. Spencer is in an utter confusion with regard to the fundamental principles of Ethics", and therefore, he is "vague as to the ethical relations of 'pleasure' and 'evolution'"⁴². I have earlier tried to show the relation of the utility principle to the evolution criterion. In this section, I will try to explore Spencer's reasons for bringing in the evolution criterion of good and right. My thesis is that it is Spencer's scientific bias that is responsible for the importance given to the evolution criterion.

It may be remarked that Spencer uses the evolution criterion for the immediate, direct, determination of the rightness or goodness, wrongness or badness, of actions. His preference for this criterion to the utility or happiness principle may be explained by pointing to his scientific bias and his attempt to make ethics scientific. It is this bias and the scientific treatment of the subject that distinguishes his Rational utilitarianism from Mill's empirical utilitarianism. Clarifying his point of departure from Mill's utilitarianism, he says;

" [The Rational Utilitarianism] does not take welfare for its immediate object of pursuit, but takes for its immediate object of pursuit conformity to certain principles which, in the nature of things, causally determine welfare".⁴³

Mill's theory makes happiness or utility the immediate object of pursuit; but according to Spencer, it is conformity to certain principles or satisfaction of certain conditions which make happiness possible. Spencer takes happiness to be

42) Moore, G.E., *Principia Ethica*, C.U.P. (1903); p. xv.

43) Spencer's *Principles*, Vol I; p 162.

the ultimate end, the realization of which is the result of, or consequent upon, the satisfaction of certain conditions which causally produce happiness. Therefore, conformity to those conditions is of the first and prior importance, and hence, conformity to them is, for Spencerian utilitarianism, the immediate object of pursuit.

This distinction between happiness and the conditions which produce happiness is of the last importance. The reasons for this are as follows:-

(1) For one thing, happiness is concerned with both quality and quantity under conditions not stated. Therefore, it is not very intelligible. Also, our perception of it may be dim, and our estimates of it vague. Now, if we knew the conditions which are the causal conditions of producing happiness, then we shall certainly be able to produce happiness even if our perception of it may be dim. Also, our estimates of it will be very definite; for, they would be based on a knowledge of those conditions which produce happiness. For these reasons, if our immediate criterion of judging conduct as good and bad is in conformity with those conditions, then our judgement has far greater probability of being correct and true.

(2) The conception of happiness differs at different times from society to society, but the general conditions which causally determine happiness remain the same. Among such conditions are included cooperation, justice, and the like. Therefore, Spencer's evolution criterion which requires conformity to the happiness producing conditions.

(3) For a third thing, if the causal conditions of happiness were not given, happiness would not accrue. Therefore, conformity to the conditions is the immediate object of pursuit;

"If there are any conditions without fulfilment of which happiness cannot be compassed, then the first step must be to ascertain these conditions with a view to fulfilling them; and to admit this is to admit that not happiness itself must be the immediate end, but fulfilment of the conditions of its attainment must be the immediate end."⁴⁴

(4) The causal conditions which produce happiness can be formulated clearly and systematized as a ~~plain~~ science, such that they are capable of empirical verification. But this may not be true of happiness, the conception and determination or estimates of which may involve a lot of subjective element, such as, personal prejudice.

(5) Finally, and most importantly, making happiness the immediate end of pursuit may give rise to certain disquieting consequences for ethical action. For, conditions which causally produce happiness may be regarded to be the means to achieving happiness. Now, if happiness is made the immediate end of action, we can skip over the means and reach directly for the end which happiness is. The end will, then, be exclusively contemplated and the means disregarded. Thus, Spencer says:

"In short, we are led to the remarkable conclusion that in all cases we must contemplate exclusively the end and must disregard the means".⁴⁵

44) Ibid, p 167.

45) Ibid, p 168. Cf. John Dewey in The Quest for Certainty particularly, the chapter on 'The Construction of Good'. Compare also C.L. Stevenson in Ethics and Language particularly, the chapter on 'The Intrinsic and Extrinsic Value', pp 174-205.

These reasons, I hope, are sufficient to show why Spencer makes conformity to the conditions of happiness and not happiness itself as the immediate end or the immediate criterion of judging actions. And, his claim is that this immediate criterion must be the evolution criterion, the assumption being that the conditions which determine the evolution of conduct also are the conditions which causally produce happiness.

The discussion as to whether this assumption, which is an empirical claim, is verifiable or not falls outside the scope of the present work. My point only is that Spencer brings in the evolution criterion in his ethical theory only in order to make ethics scientific and rigorous. In this attempt, it seems to me that he is following Mill who wrote in his, A System of Logic.⁴⁶

"The grounds, then, of every rule of art are to be found in theorems of science. An art, or a body of art, consists of the rules, together with as much of the speculative propositions as comprises the justification of those rules. The complete art of any matter includes a selection of such a portion from the science as is necessary to show on what conditions the effects which the art aims at producing depends.

"Science, therefore, following one cause to its various effects, while art traces one effect to its multiplied and diversified causes and conditions, there is need of a set of intermediate scientific truths, derived from the higher generalities of science, and destined to serve as the generalia or first principles of the various arts ... It is not, however, difficult to understand what the nature of these intermediary principles must generally be. After framing the most comprehensive possible conception of the end to be aimed at, that is, of the effect to be produced, and determining in the same comprehensive manner the set of conditions on which that effect depends, there remains to be taken a general survey of the resources which can be commanded for realising this set of conditions and

46) Mill, J.S., A System of Logic, London; pp 616-622.

when the result of this survey has been embodied in the fewest and most extensive propositions possible, those propositions will express the general relation between the available means and the end, and will constitute the general scientific theory of the art, from which its practical methods will follow as corollaries".⁴⁷

I have only to add that Spencer's evolution criterion is of the sort of an intermediate principle of which Mill spoke, and that its use as a criterion of value derives its legality or authority from the most fundamental principle of Spencer's ethical theory, the utility principle.

To sum up:- I have tried to show above that Spencer has given us a criterion for judging conduct as good and bad, right and wrong; he has not given us a definition of value. Nor has he attempted to give a deductive proof of the most fundamental principle of his ethical theory, the utility or happiness principle, although on his ethical theory both the intermediate principle of evolution and the specific judgements of ethics can be justified. The evidence in both the cases, we saw, has to be ethical; and when this is the case, the ethical reasoning with respect to both is in the deductive style, the relation between the evidence given in justification and the conclusion being the logical relation of analyticity. Finally, I gave reasons why Spencer held the evolution principle as the immediate, direct, criterion for determining the value of actions as good and bad.

I propose now to discuss Moore's criticism of Spencer's ethical theory. In the main, Moore has offered two criticisms;

47) *Ibid.*, p 619.

One is about the relation between ethics and evolution; and the other is about the relation between the happiness principle and the evolution criterion. (a) I will begin with the first criticism: The point of the criticism is that Spencer has committed the naturalistic fallacy,⁴⁸ for, Moore claims, he identifies 'higher' or 'better' with the 'more evolved', or defines the one in terms of the other. But even if he has not actually committed the naturalistic fallacy, he does not seem to be aware of its importance. This is clear from the fact that he fails to distinguish the 'more evolved' from the 'higher' or the 'better'. As a result of this failure, he asserts that having shown that certain conduct is 'more evolved' is the same thing as having shown that it is 'higher' or 'better', or that it gains ethical sanction in proportion. In the words of Moore,

- (1) "there can be no doubt that Mr. Spencer has committed the naturalistic fallacy. All that the Evolution-Hypothesis tells us is that certain kinds of conduct are more evolved than others; and this is, in fact all that Mr. Spencer has attempted to prove... Yet he tells us that one of the things it has proved is that conduct gains ethical sanction in proportion as it displays certain characteristics. What he has tried to prove is only that, in proportion as it displays those characteristics, it is more evolved. It is plain, then, that Mr. Spencer identifies the gaining of ethical sanction with the being more evolved; this follows strictly from his words".⁴⁹
- (11) "But we are entitled to urge that he is influenced by ...the naturalistic fallacy. It is only by the assumption of such influence that we can explain his confusion as to what he has really proved, and the absence of any attempt to prove, what he says he has proved, that conduct which is more evolved is better ...It is only fair to assume that he is not sufficiently conscious ... what a very different thing is being 'more evolved' from being 'higher' or 'better' ... He argues at length that certain kinds of conduct are

48) Moore, G.E., Principles Ethics, C.U.P. (1903); pp 48-49.

49) *Ibid*, p 49.

'more evolved', and then informs us that he has proved them to gain ethical sanction in proportion, without any warning that he has omitted the most essential step in such a proof".⁵⁰

(iii) Finally, if Spencer is not making the naturalistic identification of 'better' with 'more evolved', "it is possible that he is influenced by another naturalistic identification, that of 'good' with 'pleasant'. It is possible that Mr. Spencer is a naturalistic Hedonist".⁵¹ "There is, however, reason to think that part of what Mr. Spencer means is the naturalistic fallacy; that he imagines 'pleasant' or 'productive of pleasure' is the very meaning of the word 'good' ".⁵² The point is that it is very likely that Spencer has not committed the naturalistic fallacy by identifying 'better' with 'more evolved', but that he has committed it by identifying 'good' with 'pleasure' or 'productive of happiness'.

I may remark that Moore's criticism is based on his peculiar conception of evolutionistic ethics. He says:

"the ethical doctrines which have been called 'Evolutionistic' ... are those which maintain that the course of 'evolution', while it shows us the direction in which we are developing, thereby and for that reason shows us the direction in which we ought to develop".⁵³

It follows from this conception, analytically, that any evolutionistic ethics must commit the naturalistic fallacy. Now, Moore's point is that Spencer's ethics is a form of evolutionistic ethics, and that for this very reason, it must commit the naturalistic fallacy. I want to show, as my first point against Moore, that this description of

50) Ibid, p 49.

51) Ibid, p 50.

52) Ibid, p 53.

53) Ibid, p 46.

Spencer's theory is incorrect. I want to show that Spencer does not hold that "the course of 'evolution', while it shews us the direction in which we are developing, thereby and for that reason shews us the direction in which we ought to develop"⁵⁴. I will do this by reminding my reader of the logical status of the evolution criterion. The evolution criterion functions as an intermediate principle which only tells us that the more evolved conduct is the happiness-producing conduct, and since the happiness-producing conduct is good, the more evolved conduct is also good. Now, what Spencer is saying is this; we ought to develop in the direction of evolution, for the direction of evolution is one which is the direction of happiness, the ultimate end. Given the form of an argument, what Spencer is saying is this;-

- (α) (1) Happiness is good or ought to be aimed at
- (2) The perfectly evolved conduct is the conduct which produces maximum happiness
- (3) Therefore, the perfectly evolved conduct is good, or ought to be aimed at.

Clearly, the passage is from 'ought' to 'ought', not from 'is' to 'ought'. My point is that Spencer accepts the direction in which we are developing to be the direction in which we ought to develop. And this is not the same thing as saying that the direction in which we are developing is and for that reason the direction in which we ought to develop. Spencer is not saying that;

- (β) (1) We are developing in the direction of evolution
- (2) Therefore, we ought to develop in the direction of evolution.

⁵⁴ Ibid. p 46.

Moore seems not to have seen Spencer's thesis for what it is; it is (α), and he confuses it with his own conception of evolutionistic ethics which is (β). It is impossible for (β) to be valid unless the naturalistic fallacy is committed, and Moore is right here; but it is always the case that (α) is valid and no naturalistic fallacy is committed.

(1) Consider now the criticism that Spencer has identified 'better' or 'higher' with 'more evolved'. Moore's reason for this criticism is that Spencer has logically deduced an ethical proposition that conduct is better or gains ethical sanction from a factual statement which is the evolution-hypothesis. To put it simply, Moore's point is that from the fact that;

(1) Conduct is more evolved

Spencer has logically deduced the ethical conclusion that;

(2) Conduct is better or higher.

And, this deduction cannot be valid unless 'better' or 'higher' is identified with 'more evolved', or it is defined or analysed in terms of 'more evolved', i.e., unless he has committed the naturalistic fallacy. I have tried to show in the preceding section and earlier also that Moore has misunderstood Spencer on this point. Moore seems to think that Spencer has logically deduced the ethical proposition (2) from a factual proposition (1). But, what Spencer appears to have done, as I have tried to show, is the following: His fundamental ethical principle is the utility or happiness principle. He accepts the evolution principle as the intermediate principle the justification of which is provided for by the utility of happiness principle. It is only after the evolution principle is justified by the utility of happiness principle that it is harnessed as the

intermediate principle in the service of judging conduct as good and bad, right and wrong. If Spencer were required to express his reasoning to the ethical conclusion that the more evolved conduct is better, he would proceed as follows:-

(X) (1) Happiness is good

(2) The more evolved conduct is a means to happiness

(3) Therefore, the more evolved conduct is good.

Clearly this argument is ethical. Its premisses consist of a conjunction of (1) and (2) which constitute ethical evidence and its conclusion (3) is logically deduced from (1) and (2). The passage is from the ethical to the ethical, not as Moore thinks, from the factual to the ethical. Therefore, no naturalistic identification of 'better' or 'higher' with 'more evolved' is involved.

(11) According to Moore, if Spencer has not committed the naturalistic fallacy by defining 'better' or 'higher' in terms of 'more evolved', he at least tends towards it.

The reason given by Moore for this assertion is that Spencer has failed to distinguish a 'proof' of the assertion that (1) Such and such conduct is more evolved from that of a very different assertion that (2) Such and such conduct is higher or better. I want to say that this charge against Spencer, again, is based on Moore's misunderstanding of the logical structure of Spencer's ethical theory. What Spencer has done is to give a proof of the ethical proposition (2) and this proof contains ethical as well as empirical evidence; that is, the premisses contain the most fundamental principle of his ethical theory that (3) utility or happiness is the ultimate good, and that (1) Such and such conduct is more evolved or that such and such conduct is happiness-producing.

And, from (1) and (3) he logically deduces the proposition (2) that Such and such conduct or the more evolved conduct is better or higher or that it gains ethical sanction. But the proof of (1) that such and such conduct is more evolved will not be an ethical proof, unless (1) is construed to be an ethical assertion, meaning that (4) the more evolved conduct is good. The ethical proof of (4) could be given on Spencer's thesis by relating (4) to (3). What sort of proof it could be I have shown earlier. But the proof of (1) that such and such conduct is more evolved, the latter being an empirical assertion, will be inductive. Spencer has tried to marshall enough empirical evidence in support of (1), by tracing the process of evolution from the lowest of creatures to the highest of them, the human animals; he has also discussed the conditions of existence at the highest level, for instance, mutual cooperation and the like, and then by relating the most evolved conduct to the happiness-producing conduct. Whether this empirical claim is tenable or not, it is beyond the scope of my work. My point here is only this that Spencer sees the distinction between (1) and (2) and he gives a separate proof for each of them. These proofs are of different sorts; that of (1) is empirical, and that of (2) is ethical. Spencer does not confuse the two sorts of proof, nor is it the case that he gives a proof of (1) and mistakes it to be a proof of (2), as Moore accuses him of doing. ~~The~~ Moore's understanding of Spencer is thus not correct.

(111) I will not examine Moore's claim that Spencer has definitely committed the naturalistic fallacy by identifying

'bad' reflects the fact that we actually hold that pleasure is good.

The fact that reversing the applications of the words 'good' and 'bad' leads to absurdities does not require an assumption that Spencer must have identified the meanings of 'pleasant' or 'productive of pleasure' with 'good'. For, if utility principle is used as the ultimate criterion of judging conduct as good and bad, to reverse this use will certainly lead to absurdities. But in no way does it mean that the meanings of 'good' and 'bad' are identified with 'utility', 'pleasure', or 'productive of pleasure'.

Finally, Spencer's statement that virtue cannot be defined otherwise than in terms of happiness is misunderstood by Moore. In the first place, he takes it out of the context; he assumes that by saying that virtue cannot be defined except in terms of happiness, Spencer is giving us a definition of 'good'. I have shown earlier that Spencer's theory of good is a theory of the criterion of good, not a theory of the meaning or definition of 'good'. The most fundamental principle of his ethical theory is neither a tautology nor a semantical report on the use of 'good'. What Spencer seems to be saying is that if you were to justify virtue or virtuous conduct, you can do this only on the assumption that virtuous conduct produces happiness which is the ultimate good. I submit that Spencer's language here as elsewhere is not precise and this is very likely responsible for Moore's understanding.

Of Moore's two main criticisms of Spencer, I have so far dealt with the first. In this section, I propose to deal with the second criticism which is concerned with the relation between the utility principle and the evolution principle. Moore writes;

"Mr. Spencer is vague as to the ethical relations of 'pleasure' and 'evolution'".⁵⁵

"Mr. Spencer is in utter confusion with regard to the fundamental principles of Ethics".⁵⁶

"He leaves us, therefore, in doubt whether he is not still retaining the Evolutionistic proposition, that the more evolved is better simply because it is more evolved, alongside of the Hedonistic proposition, that the more pleasant is better simply because it is more pleasant".⁵⁷

This criticism has three points; (1) Spencer is confused with respect to the most fundamental principles of his ethical theory. (2) He is vague as to how the pleasure principle is related to the evolution principle. And (3), which is really a part of (2) that the evolution principle contradicts the pleasure principle.

I have mostly to repeat here what I have already said elsewhere. First, this criticism is based on a gross misunderstanding of the logical structure of Spencer's ethical theory. The Three points tend to show that the utility principle is the most fundamental principle of Spencer's ethical theory. He calls his theory a variant on utilitarianism which takes for its fundamental principle the utility principle. He uses the utility principle in justification of the evolution criterion of ethical judgement; and explicitly says that happiness is the ultimate supreme
⁵⁸ end or the ultimate good; "that happiness is the supreme end

⁵⁵) Ibid, p. xv. ⁵⁶) Ibid, p. xv. ⁵⁷) Ibid, p 52.
⁵⁸) Spencer's Principles, London; p 173 of Vol I.

is beyond question true".⁵⁹

Secondly, Moore fails to make, as Spencer has made, a distinction between intermediate principles and the most fundamental principles of ethics, and it is as a result of this failure that he is not able to see clearly the relation between the evolution principle which is an intermediary principle and the utility principle which is the most fundamental principle. The evolution principle is an empirical statement to the effect that the most evolved conduct is the happiness-producing conduct and therefore, it can be proved or disproved by empirical investigation. The statement of any ethical criterion has to be an ethical statement, which, in this case, could be formulated as 'The more evolved conduct is good', a judgement which can be justified on the ground of the utility principle and the empirical evidence which relates the more evolved conduct with the happiness-producing conduct. As the ethical judgement 'The more evolved conduct is good' requires for its justification the utility principle, it is of a lesser generality than the utility principle. The point which I want to make is that the judgement 'The more evolved conduct is good' is a ethical principle which is not independent of the utility principle. The utility principle cannot be justified by reference to this judgement, while this judgement can be justified only by reference to the utility principle. It need not be mentioned that ordinary judgements of ethics may be justified by reference to the judgement that the more evolved conduct is good.

59) Ibid, Vol I, p 172.

Towards the end of my statement of his theory, I discussed the logical status of Spencer's intermediate principle that the more evolved conduct is good conduct. Then, I dealt with Moore's two main criticisms of Spencer's theory. Both these criticisms centered around two main points:- (i) the relation of evolution to ethics, and (ii) the relation between pleasure and evolution. I tried to unearth the assumptions which Moore's criticisms made, and to show how they can be met.

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CHAPTER 6

R.B. PERRY'S ETHICAL NATURALISM

So far I have dealt with those ethicists who have been traditionally known to be ethical naturalists. They came, historically speaking, before G.E. Moore, such that it was natural to discuss them in the light of Moore's criticisms against them. I propose now to deal with those ethicists who came after G.E. Moore. These philosophers were more self-conscious in structuring their ethical theories and they took good notice of Moore's criticism of ethical naturalism when they claimed their ethical theories to be naturalistic through and through. Furthermore, these philosophers were also alive to the non-cognitivists' attacks on naturalistic ethical theories, and therefore, they self-consciously designed and structured their naturalistic ethical theories accordingly. For instance, R.B. Perry goes a long way to show that ethical judgements are verifiable empirically and that they can be true or false according as their agreement or disagreement with facts¹. For another instance, John Dewey discusses quite at length several non-cognitivist criticisms of ethical naturalism and then emphasizes the fact that ethical judgement, like any statement of science, is amenable to scientific treatment. I propose to discuss in this chapter R.B. Perry's

1) Perry modifies this position on the question of verifiability of ethical judgement in his book, Realms of Value, published in 1954.

ethical theory as given in his, General Theory of Value (1926), and Realms of Value (1954), and elucidated in some of his important papers published in the Journal of Philosophy and some other journals.

I must repeat that my study of Perry's ethical theory is oriented to the logical point of view. I am not concerned with, for example, the question whether Perry's empirical analysis of 'interest' or 'desire' is tenable or not from the view-point of recent researches in experimental psychology. From the logical point of view, I intend to discuss Perry's theory of ethical meaning (that is, meaning of ethical words and sentences), his theory of ethical reasoning, and certain other related problems. I have divided this chapter into two parts. In the first part, I have stated Perry's theory; and in the second part, I have examined it.

Theory of ethical meaning:-

For Perry, as for Moore, the fundamental problem of value theory is to "define the concept of value".² There is need of defining 'good' or 'value' because "there is no such established and universal meaning. Different people mean different things in different contexts".³ Perry seeks "to discover what it means for a thing to be good";⁴ to discover not the denotation but the connotation of the word 'good'. But in the Realms of Value, he is compelled to look at the problem in a different perspective; for, here,

2) Perry, R.B., General Theory of Value, Harvard University Press; 1926; p 17. This work will be denoted 'GTV' in subsequent references.

3) Perry, R.B., Realms of Value, Harvard University Press; 1954; p 2. This work will be denoted 'RV' in subsequent references.

4) GTV, p 18.

he finds that "the problem is not to discover a present meaning - there are only too many meanings".⁵ "Theory of value is in search of a professed meaning. The problem is to define, that is, give a meaning to the term, either by selecting from its existing meanings, or by creating a new meaning".⁶

This being his objective, he begins by distinguishing 'value' from 'the valuable'. This is the same distinction which Moore had made in the Principia Ethica between 'good' and 'the good'.⁷ The point of the distinction is that any decision on what are good things presupposes an answer to the question, 'What does it mean to say that something is good?', or 'What is the meaning of 'good'?' Put differently, the question of the meaning of 'good' or 'value' is logically prior to the question of the criteria of value, such that in order to fix the criteria or to set a standard for judging anything to be good or valuable, one must antecedently know the meaning of 'good' or 'value'. Thus Perry says that "critical judgements, that is, those judgements which involve the use of some standard of value do not constitute theory of value, - they presuppose it".⁸

This way of approaching the problem of value derives from Perry's conception of the task of any value theorist. The task of the value theorist is not to enter into a normative controversy as to what is valuable and what is not. Any normative inquiry sets norms of conduct and, then, judges conduct as good or bad according as the latter is or is not in conformity with those norms. This, however, is not the job

5) KV, p 2.

6) KV, p 2.

7) Moore's Principia, pp8-9.

8) GTV, p 18.

of a value theorist. His job is to give an analysis of the concept of value, and any normative inquiry always presupposes such an analysis. His job is only to study the concept of value analytically by describing its logical behaviour. Thus, the theory of value does not evaluate, but only critically and descriptively analyses the logical behaviour of the concept of value.

Now, Perry's claim is that value, the concept of value, is definable. This claim goes counter to Moore's claim in the Principia Ethica that 'good', the concept of good is indefinable.⁹ Perry, therefore, is at pains to show the sense in which value or good may be said to be definable, and then actually defines it. It is well to outline briefly Perry's view of the nature of definition. According to him, a definition may mean any of the following three things:-

- (1) a word may be defined by restricting its usage, as for example, 'The word 'good' will be used to refer to such and such'.
- (2) or, a particular may be defined by subsuming it under a universal, as for example, 'This is a case of 'good' '.
- (3) or, a universal may be defined, as one says, 'Goodness consists in such and such'. Definition in this sense may mean;
 - (3a) either pointing out to the universal if it is simple;
 - (3b) or analysing it into other universals if it is complex.

9) Moore's Principia, Chapter I; pp 1-36.

Perry claims that, as 'good' is a universal, being the most common predicate¹⁰, it can be defined in the sense (3a), and when Moore rejects that the concept of goodness is definable, he rejects it in the sense (3b) of definition. For, goodness is not complex, and therefore, it is impossible to define 'good' in the sense (3b). Perry's point is that Moore does not distinguish sense (3a) from sense (3b) of definition, and that consequently, by conflating the two senses, he denies the possibility of defining the concept of good.

Again, according to Perry, Moore has misunderstood statements like 'Pleasure is good' in so far as he considers the latter to be a definition of 'good'. But, the fact is that 'good' is an adjective. An adjective is predicated of something; in the present case, it is predicated of 'pleasure'; it is not defined in terms of 'pleasure'.

He says:

"Good as an adjective is not defined in terms of pleasure, but is predicated of pleasure ... He who attributes good to a certain object, does not in this act of judgement define good; and in so far as moralists have commonly failed to realize this fact, it can be said that most alleged definitions of good have employed the term in an undefined sense. But the fact that good is undefined does not argue that it is undefinable, - on the contrary, it suggests the desirability of defining it".¹¹

Moore did not see this point. He therefore argued from the concept of value being undefined to its indefinability.

But it is fallacious to argue that, because some concept has not been defined in the past, it can never be defined.

Finally, Moore's open question argument against the definability of good derives from a confusion between the sense of the definition and the sense of the inquiry or question.

10) Cf. Moore, G.E., Principia Ethica, C.U.P. (1903); p 1.
11) GTV, p 35.

The open question argument says that given any definition of 'good', it can always be pertinently asked of the definiens whether or not it is good. Suppose good is defined in terms of pleasure. Then it can always be significantly asked of pleasure whether pleasure itself is good. The point is that even after you have defined good as pleasure, it remains an open question to ask whether pleasure is good. Perry's objection is that after you have defined good in terms of pleasure, it becomes irrelevant to ask the question whether pleasure is good. For, from the point of view of the definition, no such question can be asked. Whether or not pleasure is good is an ethical question; that is, this question can be asked only from the ethical point of view. And, this ethical point of view, or to use Perry's vocabulary, this sense of the question, is different from the definitional sense of the question, or the point of view of the definition. You ask the ethical question, 'Is pleasure good?' after you have defined good in terms of pleasure only when you do not distinguish the sense of the definition from the sense of the inquiry or question. That is to say, it is only when you fail to segregate the two points of view, that of definition and that of ethics, that you can use the open question argument. In no other case, the open question argument can be used. Thus, Perry says:

"it is absurd to ask whether an object defined as possessing a certain character does in fact possess that character, provided the sense of the definition and the sense of the inquiry are precisely the same".¹²

With the preliminaries cleared, Perry defines value as any object of any interest. He writes:

¹²) *GLV*, p 37.

"According to the definition of value here proposed, anything - anything - has value, or is valuable, in the original and generic sense when it is the object of an interest - any interest. Or, whatever is object of interest is ipso facto valuable".¹³

He says:

"The word 'interest' points to attitudes of for and against, or what are sometimes called "motor-affective" attitudes".¹⁴ " [It is a] name for a certain class of acts or states which have the common characteristic of being for or against".¹⁵

Perry claims that his definition of value is descriptive of a certain selected body of facts.¹⁶ It indicates, represents faithfully, the nature of the facts of the region of the world that our value terms roughly indicate.¹⁷ His definition is an hypothesis justified by its adequacy and correctness as a description of the data in this region.

By 'interest' he means any "state, act, attitude, or disposition of favour or disfavour"¹⁸. And, "that which is an object of interest is eo ipso invested with value. Any object, whatever it be, acquires value when any interest, whatever it be, is taken in it".¹⁹

Perry cites three criteria: (i) linguistic, (ii) formal, and (iii) empirical, for testing the correctness of his definition of value. The linguistic criterion includes the use of words; the formal, the clarity, definiteness, testability, and fruitfulness of the concepts which it employs; and the empirical, its capacity to describe certain facts of life, to which it refers, and by which it is verified.²⁰ He claims that his definition satisfies all these three criteria.

13) RV, pp 2-3.

14) RV, p 7.

15) RV, pp 10-11.

16) Frankena, William K., p 362, Philosophy (ed., Chisholm &c.), a Prentice-Hall publication.

17) RV, p 6. 18) RV, pp 10-11. 19) GTV, p 115. 20) GTV, pp 115-6.

His definition is designed "to be at one and the same time a nominal definition, an abstract or apriori definition, and a "real" definition".²¹ Perry says:

"The present definition of value is proposed not only as a nominal and conceptual, but as a "real" or "descriptive", definition".²²

"A descriptive definition, in short, is an hypothesis. Its crucial test is its bringing to light the systematic structure of some realm of fact - some state of affairs of which it is true."²³

"The evidence of its [i.e., of anything] goodness or badness is the observable fact of interest, which is just as objective, and just as open to agreement, as any other facts of life or history".²⁴

This definition may be formulated in the equation;

"x is valuable" = df. "interest is taken in x".

Value is thus a "specific relation into which things possessing any ontological status whatever, whether real or imaginary, may enter with interested subjects".²⁵ This definition is the generic sense of value. Specific sorts of values, for example, aesthetic or ethical, can be classified "in terms of the different forms which interests and their objects may be found to assume".²⁶ Note also that to say that 'x has value for y' is the logical equivalent of 'y values x'. Or to say that 'x has value for y for g' is to say that 'g values x with respect to y'. Thus, value has no meaning unless there is a g who values x and x which is valued and y with respect to which x is valued. In a word, value may be defined as "the relation of an object to a valuing subject" where 'valuing', and 'act of valuing' mean the same thing, and consists in "simply liking,

20) RV, p 3. 21) RV, p 3. 22) RV, p 13. 23) RV, p 13.
24) RV, p 13. 25) GTV, p 116. 26) GTV, p 116.

desiring or being favourably disposed to the object".²⁷ We may put it still in a different way; " Value is the peculiar relation between any interest and its object; or that special character of an object which consists in the fact that interest is taken in it".

I will call attention to two points about this definition. One, this definition is not an answer to a question of fact, but to one of analysis. A question of fact is one an answer to which is verifiable to be true or false by observation or by the usual methods of science. Perry's definition is not an answer to a question of fact. In fact, no definition is an answer to a question of fact. For, the questions of fact "ascertain the specific facts and probabilities upon which they turn."²⁸ The notion of a 'question of analysis' may be explained by way of examples. The questions, "What is the definition of such and such concept?", "What do we mean when we say that such and such thing is good?" and the like are questions of analysis; answers to them give an analysis of the concepts about which the questions are asked. We may describe a question of analysis by saying that questions of analysis are questions about the meaning of expressions or the logical behaviour of concepts about which the questions are asked.

Perry's general definition, as I have said earlier, is an answer to a question of analysis. For, "it concerns itself with the assumption and must therefore always appear to deal with the obvious rather than with the questionable. Its proper task

27) GTV, p 112.

28) GTV, p 124.

29) GTV, p 126.

is to make these assumptions explicit and consistent. By so doing it will inevitably affect the solution of such special questions, since it will prescribe the terms and the principles of their solution. But it has to do with the use which is to be made of evidence, rather than with the uncovering of new facts".³⁰ Therefore, there can be no conclusive proof of a general definition of value.³¹ Such a definition is an experiment in generalization,³² and its validity depends on its success in facilitating the solution of all special questions of value.

Two, Perry's general definition is neither an analytic definition of the meaning of value, nor a report on the usage of the word 'value', but only a proposal as to how to use the word in order to have a science of value amenable to scientific treatment. I will attempt to show in the second half of this chapter how far Perry's proposal is acceptable, particularly from the naturalistic point of view. Perry claims, as stated earlier, that his definition of value is 'descriptive' in the sense that it indicates or represents faithfully the nature and structure of the facts of that region of the world which our value terms roughly indicate.

We have seen what Perry means by 'value'. The definition of 'value' that he gives states the generic meaning of 'value'. We can make appropriate changes in the definition in order to get out of it the definitions of various moral concepts,

30) GTV, p126.

31) GTV, p 126.

32) GTV, p 126.

such as 'good', 'right', 'ought', etc., On Perry's theory, "in the most general sense, it (i.e., 'good') means the character which anything derives from being the object of any positive interest; whatever is desired, liked, enjoyed, willed, or hoped for, is thereby good".³³ In a special sense, 'morally good' is the character imparted to objects by interests harmoniously organised".³⁴ He says;

"An object is good in the generic sense when it is the object of a positive interest; it is morally good in the special sense when the interest which makes it good satisfies the requirement of harmony, that is, innocence and cooperation".³⁵

The same is true of 'right', 'wrong', and 'ought': "An act is right when it conduces to the moral good, that is, to harmonious happiness; and it is wrong when it conduces to disharmony".³⁶ The rightness of an act "consists in its [being conducive to or] contributing to harmonious happiness. This is the root meaning of 'right' and 'wrong'".³⁷

Similarly, what "ought to be done is what is called for by some good; it is the converse of right. The moral ought is what is called for by the end of the moral good, that is, by harmonious happiness".³⁸ Thus, "when it is said that an act 'ought' to be performed, it is meant that the act is called for by some good to which the act is conducive".³⁹

These definitions of morally 'good', 'right', and 'ought' are only the special cases of the generic meaning of 'value'. I propose, therefore, to discuss only the generic meaning of 'value'; and whatever I have to say in regard to it is, with suitable changes, applicable to the special definitions of morally 'good', 'right', and 'ought'.

33) RV, p 101. 34) RV, p 101. 35) RV, p 104. 36) RV, p 107.
37) RV, p 107. 38) RV, p 109. 39) RV, p 109.

Theory of Ethical Judgement:-

Having said that 'to be valuable means to be the object of interest', Perry distinguishes two sorts of judgements, interest judgement and value judgement. This distinction follows from the fact that interest is different from value; for, on Perry's theory, value is a function of interest, and therefore, it is not to be identified with interest. An interest judgement is a judgement about interest; while a value judgement is a judgement about the value of an object. Both types of judgements are empirically verifiable; hence, they can be assigned the truth values of truth and falsity according as they agree or disagree with facts which they are said to describe. An interest judgement is true or false; for being interested is an empirically verifiable characteristic. Similarly, a value judgement also is empirically verifiable; and, hence, can be true or false. For, being an object of interest (that is, being valuable) is an empirical characteristic.

Perry denies that value is unique as regards knowledge and truth, such that there is no distinction, logically speaking, between judgements of value or practical judgements and theoretical judgements of the kind we have in descriptive sciences. Perry says;

"The knowledge of morality differs from other kinds of knowledge not qua knowledge, but in its subject-matter".⁴⁰

"moral knowledge possesses the same general characteristics, and is subject to the same discipline as all knowledge. It is true or false according to the evidence. It must avoid contradictions. It must invent and verify hypotheses These and all other formal

40) RV, p 122.

criteria, or maxims, applicable to knowledge in general, are applicable to moral knowledge in particular, and in the same sense".⁴¹

"Value judgements are not distinguished formally, as relational and subject predicate judgements may be distinguished; but materially, by the specific nature of the relation or predicate asserted. Similarly, value judgements are true or false in whatever sense holds of judgements generally; which I believe to be the sense (broadly speaking) of agreement or disagreement with facts".⁴²

Again,

"[Value judgements] do not differ formally from other judgements ... they are true or false".⁴³

Further,

"The judgement of value is the judgement about anything to the effect that interest is taken in it".⁴⁴

To specify the difference between a value judgement and a descriptive or theoretial judgement;- this difference is the difference of subject matter; and it consists in the fact that value judgements are judgements about our pro and con interests or attitudes. Barring this difference of subject matter, value judgements, logically speaking, are of the same form as any theoretical judgement, - descriptive, empirical, verifiable, capable of truth and falsity. Clearly, Perry adopts the perceptual model with respect to both function and verification of ethical judgements, as distinguished from the justificatory model with respect to verification and the imperativel model with respect to the function of ethical expressions.

Two points may be noted about Perry's theory of ethical judgement as belief-statement about values: One, the action-guiding characteristic is not a part of the

41) RV, p 122.

42) Perry, R.B., 'Value and Its Moving Appeal', Phil. Rev., Vol 41, No 4, July 1932; pp 337-350; p. 337.

43) GRV, p 365. 44) GRV, p 366.

meaning of ethical expressions. Even so, we can explain the action-guiding function, or the moving appeal, of an ethical judgement by pointing out to the fact that our beliefs lead us to action. Perry says:

"We do not remain indifferent to that which is merely existent. Our joy and grief, our hopes and fears, are ordinarily excited by judgements of existence".⁴⁵

Two words are very often saturated with some emotive content, and this emotive content or "the motor-effective spell of words"⁴⁶ has a role to play in disposing us to moral action. He says,

"The widely accepted terms of praise are charged with the quality of praise. Over and above the more specific and descriptive meanings that divide them there is the general expressive meaning which unites them. They signify the favour and support of the group in which they are current, and whoever accepts their applications to any of his acts is disposed to its performance by virtue of the coercive presence of the social sanction".⁴⁷

Perry's Theory of ethical reasoning:-

We have seen that value judgements involve pro and con interests or attitudes. Interests and attitudes may clash or come in conflict with each other. Therefore, there can be disagreement in value matters. In other words, two value judgements may contradict each other. The function of reasoning in value matters, according to Perry's theory, is to resolve this sort of value disagreement by way of linking and giving a perspective to the clashing or conflicting interests and attitudes. Perry uses the expression 'rationalisation'⁴⁸ for reasoning of the sort which I am talking about. The function of rationalisation or 'reasoning'

45) Perry's 'Value and Its Moving Appeal', Phil. Rev., Vol 41, No 4, July 1932, pp 332-350; p 342.

46) Ibid, p 342. 47) Ibid, pp 342-3. 48) GTV, 385.

is to integrate or to resolve disagreement in value matters.

"Rationalisation is not a mere stating of his reasons by the agent. It is finding of new reasons, or the introduction of new mediating judgements. These have the effect of linking interests in new ways, or of introducing integration where it did not exist before Rationalisation is the introduction of such acts of mediation for the sake of integration which it effects. Its purpose is to attract to any interest or to its object, the favour and support of other interests."49

Further;

"The result of rationalisation is often to create a new end which is distinguished by its integrative character, or by the fact that it is confluent with many interests, drawing them together, embodying them jointly. Such ends, or constructive ideals are both synthetic and creative".50

It is clear from the above quotations that for Perry the function of reasoning in value matters is to resolve disagreements by linking the clashing interests or by creating new inclusive interests. I will presently ask the question in what way the reasons perform this function of resolving value disagreements. Before that however, let me state Perry's conception of 'reason'.

Perry says that sound reasoning in value matters is possible, and it is in fact done. We act for certain reasons, so that when we are asked, 'Why do you do so?', we are able to answer, 'For such and such reason'. However, Perry does not distinguish between a reason and a cause; rather he disparages the theory which does not identify the reasons for an action with its causes. Thus, he speaks of 'the false notion that the reasons

49) GRV, p 386.

50) GRV, p 386.

for action are not causes of action".⁵¹ For him,

"The reason for an action is essentially and primarily a mediating condition of its performance. It is not only a determining condition, but is that proximate, crucial and controllable condition for which the term 'cause' is peculiarly appropriate".⁵²

Furthermore,

"Reasons could not 'put an end to conflict', or remove the inhibiting effect of an antagonistic complex, if they were not psychical causes".⁵³

Two points emerge here; One: Reasons according to Perry's conception, are causes which effect or resolve (and this is two) disagreement in value matters. It follows that whatever be the relation between reasons as causes and resolution of disagreement as effects, that relation must be factual, empirical; in no case can it be a logical relation which can only hold between propositions, not between events. Therefore, it is absolutely irrelevant to Perry's analysis to talk of reasons as logically related to value judgements.

In what manner do reasons as causes effect the resolution of value disagreements? To this question, Perry's answer is: 'By appeal to the other party's interests! It is by this appeal to the other party's interests that reasons are made convincing; they afford a new perspective of interests to the party to be convinced or persuaded. He writes;

"Men want for their actions reasons which will appeal also to their fellows. They need help or fear interference, or they may merely be sensitive to social approval and disapproval. Such being the case, a man hesitates to act unless he possesses a belief about the action which when professed will dispose others favourably towards the action ... he makes such statements as are calculated to conciliate or attract the interests of others".⁵⁴

51) QIV, 387. 52) QIV, p 388. 53) QIV, p 388.
54) QIV, p 391.

But, how does one make one's reasons convincing? He does this by explaining his actions "by reasons which others, in terms of their own interests, may also find convincing".⁵⁵ That is to say, reasons can be convincing only in terms of interests. The aim of the reasoner is, on Perry's conception, to persuade the other party by appeal to the other party's interests. If either he is successful in his persuasions, or the other party succeeds in persuading him, then the disagreement on the given question of value is resolved, and not otherwise. And, this is done not by logical argument, but by psychological persuasion only.

This type of reasoning functions at both personal and social levels. Its logic, however, remains the same as that of persuasion. At the personal level it is self-persuasion, and at the interpersonal or social level, it becomes a question of persuading the other party. But, in all cases, the function of this type of reasoning is "to enable a man or a nation or mankind, despite the wide variety of opinions and interests that must divide them, to find some common ground for harmonious and united action".⁵⁶

Perry has talked of a second kind of reasoning which he calls ex post facto reasoning. As the name suggests, it is a sort of reasoning which is done after the action has already been accomplished and when you are required to defend yourself. In other words, here we are concerned

55) *QIV*, p 391.

56) *QIV*, p 399.

with reasons we give after an action is done and we are faced with "the question of the defensibility of the act",⁵⁷ or when we ask, 'What reasons can you now find for doing the action?' In this type of reasoning, we do not give an historical explanation of the factors that led to the performance of the action; for, such an explanation is irrelevant because of the fact that the action has already been performed. We, however, give reasons for it only because these reasons are the conditions of the performance of the action and it is only by way of these conditions that the agent's action, his future action, can be controlled and directed by persuasion. Perry says;

"It is absurd to suppose that when challenged to 'explain' one's action one is supposed to give an historical account of its conditions. The point of the question ['What reasons can you now find for doing the action A?'] is to render the actions susceptible to the influence of opinion and discussion. The agent is called upon to give reasons for his action, because these are the conditions of performance by which it is subject to control by persuasion".⁵⁸

The way Perry talks of reasoning in this case also clearly shows that to give reasons for an action is to mention causes of the action. The relation between reasons and action, here again, must be factual, empirical. In no case can it be said to be logical. In fact, logic does nowhere enter Perry's account of ethical reasoning. What he is talking of is psychology and psychology only.

Perry's theory of 'proof' of moral knowledge:-

In the preceding section, I have discussed what Perry's theory of reasoning in moral matters is. There I tried to

57) GTV, p 393.

58) GTV, pp 393-394.

show that his theory of 'reasoning' is no more than an empirical exercise in the field of cause-effect relations. Juxtaposed to this theory of reasoning, Perry has given another theory of ethical reasoning which essentially is the same as the one given by J.S. Mill in his Utilitarianism, or the one given by Jeremy Bentham in his Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation. I propose to deal with this second theory of ethical reasoning now.

Perry begins by accepting the statement that moral good is the harmonious happiness as the first principle of his ethical theory. This first principle works as the criterion or the standard for judging objects and actions as good or bad. Furthermore, the first principle is the premiss from which right, duty, and virtue are derived.⁵⁹ The question is, 'How to justify this first principle? To answer this, Perry reasserts his basic thesis that moral knowledge differs from other kinds of knowledge not qua knowledge but in its subject-matter,⁶⁰ such that an ethical judgement, being verifiable empirically, can be said to be true or false according to the evidence.⁶¹ However, he distinguishes two kinds of moral knowledge: one, derivative, and two, basic. (1) The derivative moral knowledge is one in which a moral judgement is logically derived or deduced from one statement or a set of statements in conjunction with the first principle of morality, viz., the principle of harmonious happiness. Take, for example, the act of homicide. "When an act of homicide is judged to be wrong

59) RV, p 119. 60) RV, p 122. 61) RV, p 122.

it is ordinarily sufficient to call it 'murder'. That is deemed sufficient, since it is assumed that murder is wrong [wrong by the standard of harmonious happiness] ".⁶² Reasoning in this case and the other cases of derivative moral knowledge follows the usual pattern of syllogistic argument or the application of a general rule or principle to a certain specific case. Again, the logical relation between the reasons cited and the conclusion will be the usual relation of analyticity. Finally, this sort of reasoning goes from ethical premisses to ethical conclusion, not from factual premisses to ethical conclusion, such that the argument is homogeneous, and not heterogeneous, ethically.

Two remarks are in place: One, here the concept of reason is not identified, but is sharply distinguished from the concept of cause. The justification of an ethical judgement is the logical justification showing the truth of the justifiability of the ethical judgement and not an act of persuasion, the aim of which is to make some ethical judgement acceptable by altering the attitude of the disagreeing party.

Two, this theory of reasoning works only within the framework of some accepted ethical principle; that is to say, it works only where the disagreeing parties share the same ethical principles and also the order of precedence in them, such that if any dispute with regard to the morality of any specific case arises, they can refer the dispute to the highest court of their commonly shared ethical principles. This theory

62) RV, p 121.

fails to work where there is disagreement on the ethical principles themselves.

(11) The derivative moral knowledge presupposes basic moral knowledge. The basic moral knowledge is the knowledge of the moral principles or the first principles of ethical theory. In Perry's case, it is knowledge of the principle of harmonious happiness. In defence of individual ethical judgements (including the ethical rules of lesser generality) we cite the principle of harmonious happiness; for on Perry's thesis, "things are morally right and wrong, good and bad, obligatory and forbidden, judged by the standard of harmonious happiness".⁶³ How do we know the principle of harmonious happiness itself? This question is the question of basic moral knowledge. To answer this question, Perry makes a distinction between adopting the standard of harmonious happiness, and applying this standard.⁶⁴ The whole of derivative moral knowledge is no more than an application of the standard of harmonious happiness to certain specific cases or certain classes of cases. Knowledge of the conditions of adopting the principle of harmonious happiness belongs to the basic knowledge of morality. Perry says:

"There are two judgements, the judgement which adopts the standard, and the judgement which applies it. The fundamental question of moral knowledge is the question of the proof of the first or basic judgement. It is a judgement about a standard, and to the effect that a specific standard, such as harmonious happiness, occupies a peculiar place among standards, and is entitled to be designated as "the moral standard". This is not a moral judgement in the sense of assigning such predicates as "good", "right", and "ought". Moral theory, whether it asserts that the ultimate moral standard is happiness, or that the moral right or good is indefinable, or that duty is obedience to God, or that the right is the reasonable, stands outside

63) RV, p 123.

64) RV, p 123;

the whole circle of such judgement, and makes non-moral statements about them".⁶⁵

The point that Perry' is making is that basic moral knowledge is possible, that is, we can be said to know the first principle of his ethical theory, the principle of harmonious happiness. And that this knowledge consists in giving non-moral reasons or stating non-moral reasons for adopting the principle. We cannot give moral reasons for the truth of the principle; for, all moral reasons whatever must derive from the principle of harmonious happiness itself which alone is the ultimate moral good. And the reasons that we give for the principle of harmonious happiness cannot be the reasons derived from the principle itself. Therefore, no moral reasons can be given in justification of the principle of harmonious happiness. Whatever reasons can be given in justification of the principle must be non-moral reasons. Such non-moral reasons go only to show why we adopt the principle; in no wise do they go to show the truth of the principle of itself.

Perry's argument for adopting the principle of harmonious happiness or his 'proof' of the standard of harmonious happiness is similar in structure to the one given by J.S. Mill in the Utilitarianism. He divides his argument into two parts; (i) to show that the harmonious happiness should be in fact a standard, or qualified to be a standard; and (ii) to show that the harmonious happiness is the moral standard, to the exclusion of other standards for which a similar claim is made. He emphasizes upon the fact that both these conditions (i) and (ii) are required in order to show why we should adopt the principle of harmonious happiness. For, if the first condition is not satisfied, then we have no

reason to make the assertion that the principle of harmonious happiness is in fact the standard. And, if the second condition is not satisfied, then "there should be no ground of persuasion by which the adherent of another standard could be converted to this standard of harmonious happiness."⁶⁶

Although Perry calls his argument to be a 'proof' of moral knowledge, he does not mean to give a rigorous, deductive proof of it. What he means to do is to advance arguments (that is, reasons or considerations) in support of the principle of harmonious happiness, "arguments which, though they may not satisfy everybody, at least have the merit of being appropriate to the thesis which is to be proved."⁶⁷

Here are Perry's considerations which go to satisfy the conditions (i) and (ii). In satisfaction of the first condition, he gives two considerations: one, theoretical, and two, practical. Both the considerations go to show that "the standard of harmonious happiness is capable of being agreed on - both theoretically and practically".⁶⁸

Theoretically, because it "satisfies the requirement of cognitive universality and objectivity; that is, it is the same for all knowers who address themselves to the subject".⁶⁹

Practically, because "the good of harmonious happiness, since it embraces all interests, is to some extent to everybody's interest, and thereby obtains a breadth of support exceeding that of any other good. Every person, including

65) RV, p 123. 66) RV, p 123. 67) RV, p 132. 68) RV, p 132.

69) RV, p 132.

the person to whom the argument is addressed, has some stake in it".⁷⁰ Thus, Perry concludes the first part of his argument in proof of moral knowledge:

"Hence, the norm of harmonious happiness is doubly universal. It is universal in the theoretical sense; its nature and its implications are objective, and the judgements in which it is employed are equally true for all judges; and being abstracted from particular interests, it is applicable to all human situations. It is also universal in the social sense; its promised benefits accrue to all men, and to all men collectively. It is a norm on which all men can unite and agree - both theoretically and practically".⁷¹

The second condition also is satisfied. For, the standard of harmonious happiness is presupposed by all our value judgements and estimates. For instance, it is embodied in the Golden Rule.⁷² Furthermore, disagreements as to the specific applications of moral opinion are settled by a reference to the principle of harmonious happiness. Perry says:

"Equally significant is the fact that when men differ as to the specific applications of moral opinion it is to the standard of harmonious happiness that they look for common good. And it is by this standard that men criticise and justify their major social institutions - conscience itself, polity, law, economy - by which they define the places in human society that are to be allotted to art, science, education, and religion".⁷³

Perry claims that his 'proof' of the principle of harmonious happiness is 'empirical' in the full sense of the term; for it is based on "a system of concepts verified by the data of human life".⁷⁴

Two comments are required; (1) As I have already made explicit, Perry's 'proof' of moral knowledge is not a deductive proof. Nor does the set of reasons or arguments

70) RV, pp 132-3. 71) RV, p 133. 72) RV, pp 133-5.
73) RV, p 135. 74) RV, p 135.

which he has put forth in any way show the truth of the principle of harmonious happiness. These reasons aim to show why the principle of harmonious happiness should be adopted or accepted to be true; they show why Perry holds the principle to be true; but in no way do they go to show that the principle itself is true. The sort of reasons which Perry has offered in support of the principle constitute a pragmatic justification of the principle of harmonious happiness; they do not constitute its logical or cognitive justification.⁷⁵

Two: The second comment that I wish to make is concerning the following para;

"If harmonious happiness can be truly affirmed to be the moral standard it must so agree with human nature and the circumstances of human life that men can adopt it by education, persuasion, and choice; and, having adopted it, can govern their conduct in accordance with its requirements. It must be qualified to serve as a criterion by which human interests, acts, characters, and organisations can be classified and ranked. The evidence that it satisfied these requirements will be found in the fact that it is so adopted and employed".⁷⁶

When I analyse this para, I find that it has the following logical structure:-

(A) (1) The principle of harmonious happiness is in fact adopted and employed as the standard of good and bad;

(2) Therefore, it is the standard of good and bad.

Given a slightly different form, we may like to state it as follows:

(B) (1) The principle of harmonious happiness is in fact acknowledged to be the standard of good and bad;

(2) Therefore, it is the standard of good and bad.

75) For an excellent account of the distinction between

Reasoning in both (α) and (β) from (1) to (2) presents the same logical problem which I pointed out while discussing Mill.⁷⁷ My solution to this problem here also is the same as I offered there. The solution is that (a) the argument is not deductive, and (b) there is no way of asserting that some principle is the standard of good and bad unless we have in fact acknowledged that principle to be the standard of good and bad. I am not quite sure how far my position on this point is satisfactory; but, for the present, I do not have a better solution of the problem.

I propose now to criticise and evaluate Perry's ethical theory in so far as it is naturalistic and his (so-called) scientific methods of generalisation and verification. Before I proceed on to a detailed criticism, however, I would like to make a few general remarks:-

(1) Perry gives a definition of value, and this definition is in terms of interest. This is in sharp contrast with Bentham, Mill, and Herbert Spencer, who give us a theory of criterion of value, and do not bother about the question of definition of value. Again, Perry, unlike Mill, for example, makes the question of meaning of value to be the primary question of value theory. He does this following the lead of G.E. Moore. And, it is natural that he should have done this.

cognitive and pragmatic justification, see Feigl, Herbert, 'De Principiis Non Disputandum ...? On the Meaning and the Limits of Justification' in Philosophical Analysis, ed. Max Black, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1963; pp 113-147. 76) RV, p 123.
 77) RV, p 123.
 78) See p 107 of the present work.

(2) Perry's general orientation in his General Theory of Value (1926) is psychological, but in his Realms of Value (1954), it is mainly logical. Consequently, his account of ethical reasoning in the latter work is far more satisfactory from the point of view of ethical methodology than the one given in the General Theory of Value.

(3) Perry's model of analysis of ethical judgement is perceptual. For him, an ethical judgement functions in the same way, that is, descriptively, as any other theoretical or factual judgement does, so that formally or logically, there is no distinction whatever between an ethical judgement and a descriptive, factual statement.

(4) The same perceptual model is employed when Perry discusses the problem of the verification of ethical judgement. An ethical judgement can be verified to be true or false by checking up whether or not it corresponds with facts. This sense of 'verification' is the same as the alpha sense of 'verification' discussed by me in the third chapter of the present work. Notwithstanding this model, he does not hesitate to assert that individual ethical judgements are verified by reference to the first principle of his ethical theory; and that the first principle itself is verified not by hunting the referents of the concepts involved in it, that is, on the perceptual model, but by reference to the pragmatic considerations which enable us to adopt or accept the principle to be true, that is, on the justificatory model.

With these general remarks, I will now go on to the main business of examining Perry's type of ethical naturalism.

Consider first Perry's definition of 'value' or 'good' in terms of interest. "To be valuable is to be an object of interest". Perry regards this statement that 'to be valuable is to be an object of interest' as (i) a definition of value, as (ii) the most fundamental synthetic principle of his theory of value; and also as (iii) one which itself is not a value judgement. I will consider these three alternatives separately and try to show that Perry is in utter confusion with regard to the logical status of the first principle of his ethical theory.

(a) "Value is any object of any interest" - this statement as a statement of the definition of value defines value as any object of any interest. Taking value to be the same as good, the definition takes the following form;

Value = df. any object of any interest;

Or;

Good = df. any object of any interest.

Stated slightly differently, the whole statement of the definition of value or good amounts to this statement;

Any object of any interest is good.

Regarding this statement to be a definition, I can look at it in two ways; (1) the definition is analytic; hence non-informative of any non-linguistic state of affairs. And, two (2) the definition is a sort of ostensive definition. Now, my claim is that this definition of value as any object of any interest cannot be used either as the most fundamental principle of any value theory, or the criterion for judging the value of objects; for neither of them is noninformative statement. Rather, if it is not noninformative, but a synthetic proposition, then the definition must commit

the naturalistic fallacy; and, it also gives rise to certain cases in which a decision procedure for saying that an object has value excludes the ordinary methods of empirical science but must involve some sort of intuition which may be said to reveal non-empirical characteristics.

The definition cannot be even taken as an ostensive definition. It is impossible to point out to an universal, as the concept of good, for example, is, unless you assumed that universals exist in some sense of the word 'exist'. A theory of universals which asserts that universals exist in some sense of 'exist' is based on a theory of language and meaning which no thinker after he has read Wittgenstein and Quine is likely to hold. But, Perry does hold that values must be said to exist in some sense of the word 'exist'; they must be said to exist if not in the ordinary, common-sensical, sense of empirical existence, but in the sense in which numbers, for example, are said to exist. His point is that you cannot have a scientific, empirical theory of value, or that you cannot use the empirical method of observation if values do not exist. And, we know that some values at least, do not exist. He therefore suggests a way out:-

"We seem compelled then, to provide for non-existent objects, that is, for some supplementary category of being or subsistence. Theory of value can thus be empirical or descriptive only in a sense which is sufficiently elastic to permit of its being extended to this wider realm". 78

This suggestion, however, seems to me to be suicidal. You can use the methods of empirical observation with regard to things

which are amenable to the application of such methods. In the case of things which do not exist, the methods of empirical observation are useless; for that which does not exist cannot be observed also. The use of the methods of empirical observation requires that things to which the methods are to be applied must exist and exist in the ordinary, empirical, sense. To posit the existence of values in some non-empirical sense and at the same time to assert that this sort of thing is necessary in order that the empirical methods of observation may be used is to say contradictory things."

So far my point has been that to define value in terms of objects which do not exist in the ordinary empirical sense but subsist as Plato's Ideas do, is to have a theory of universals which is based on a faulty theory of language and meaning, and it is also to exclude the use of empirical methods of observation which Perry is so keen to retain in order to make value theory empirical and scientific.

I will now try to show that Perry's definition must commit the naturalistic fallacy of identifying good with a naturalistic object. (I have deliberately used the word 'naturalistic' following Moore's use to include not only the empirical objects and their characteristics but also non-empirical objects and their characteristics). This is usually shown by pointing out that Perry's definition of value or good in terms of any object of any interest is open to Moore's open question argument. I have earlier shown that the open question argument is. I have also shown how Perry steers clear of the argument by pointing out that the open question argument can be used only where we have already

confused the sense of definition with the sense of inquiry or question. I agree with Perry in so far as his defense against the open question argument goes. I claim, however, that in spite of the fact that the open question argument is not applicable to Perry's definition, or for that matter (to generalize), to any definition of good or value, Perry's definition of value or good in terms of any object of any interest does commit the naturalistic fallacy. For, I believe that to be an object of interest is at best only a criterion of value, not the meaning of value. For, in order to be able to say whether or not something is good or valuable, we have to determine whether or not that thing is an object of interest. If it is an object of interest, then we may say that that thing is good or valuable. That to be an object of interest is a condition of value is admitted by Perry himself also. He says:

"A certain positive plausibility is given to this hypothesis [i.e., the hypothesis of value as any object of any interest] by the fact that in order to create values where they did not exist before it seems to be sufficient to introduce an interest". 79

Therefore, he concludes, value is any object of any interest. The fact that an interest is taken in an object only makes that object valuable. "To be valuable" is logically equivalent to "to be something which is valuable" or "to be a value". "To be a value" is not a logical equivalent of "value" or "good", where "value" or "good" is a universal of the same order and with the same meaning as "goodness". Perry makes a clear distinction between 'good things' and 'goodness', or 'valuable things' and 'value'; but, it appears, as it is obvious from

my analysis of Perry's definition of value, that he confuses 'value' or 'good' or 'goodness' with 'a value', 'the good', or 'good things' or 'valuable things'. What he had started with was to give a meaning or definition of value or good; what he actually achieves is a definition of 'a value', 'the good', or 'a valuable thing', or 'a good thing'.

Thus, I am prepared to go with Perry in so far as he holds that 'to be an object of any interest' is the logical equivalent of 'to be something which is a value or is valuable'; but I do not see any reason to accept 'to be an object of any interest' to be the definition or meaning of the word 'good' or 'valuable'. To be an object of any interest can at best be a criterion of judging something to be valuable or good or a value, but this criterion cannot be identified with the meaning of the word 'good' or 'valuable'. The word 'good' or 'valuable' and like words are used to commend certain things or persons or practices, or to prescribe certain guide-lines for choice and action. And to identify the meaning with the criterion of 'good' or 'valuable' is to commit the naturalistic fallacy.⁸⁰

I have so far tried to show that Perry's definition of value commits the naturalistic fallacy by identifying the criterion of value with the meaning of it; that he fails to maintain the distinction between 'value' as a universal concept and 'a value' or 'values' as a particular and class concepts respectively; that is, between 'good' and 'a good',

80) For an excellent account of the distinction between meaning and criterion, see Hare, R.M., The Language of Morals, Oxford University Press: 1952; pp 94-110.

with the disquieting result that his proposed definition turns out to be a definition of 'a good', 'a valuable thing', of 'a value', and not of value or 'good' as a universal concept. I propose now to show that definition, any definition whatsoever, by the logic of it, is analytic, and the statement of it a tautology. No analytic statement or a tautology gives us information about any non-linguistic state of affairs. It thus being a non-informative statement, cannot be used either as a criterion of judging things or actions as good or bad, or as an ethical principle. For, it is a necessary condition of any criterion or the first principle of any ethical theory that it must be significant, say something so that it can be used for making significant assertions, given any ethical or value situation. A contentless statement which is true by virtue of the meanings of the terms used, or of the rules of the use of the concepts involved, is a non-significant statement. Perry's definition being such a statement, is therefore useless either as a criterion of value or as a first principle of value theory.

A third way of looking at Perry's definition of value in terms of any object of any interest is to regard it as a report on the usage of the term 'value'. I have earlier tried to show that his definition misses the mark; instead of its being a definition of the concept of value, it in fact, is a definition of the concept of 'a value' or 'a valuable thing'. Even so, if we took it to be a report on the usage of the term 'value', it at best turns out to be a non-ethical linguistic statement. Such a non-ethical statement cannot be used either as a reason or a criterion of value, i.e., of judging conduct as good and bad.

To sum up:- The point that I have tried to show in criticising Perry's definition of value is that Perry's whole plan of defining 'value' or 'good' as a universal concept fails of the function it was designed to perform. He has either failed to define the concept of 'value' or committed the naturalistic fallacy, or at best reduced the most fundamental principle of value theory and the criterion of value to either a verbal or a non-value linguistic statement.

Furthermore, Perry does not appear to be quite sure of the logical status of his statement that 'to be valuable is to be any object of any interest'. That he takes it (1) to be a statement of definition of value needs no more comments. Also, he regards it (2) to be "the fundamental synthetic judgement of value"⁸¹. Finally, he uses it (3) as the criterion of judging value.⁸² Of the moral good he says;

"The moral good has been defined as harmonious happiness, or as that organisation of interests in which each enjoys the non-interference and support of the others, whether within the personal life or the life of society. This becomes the moral "first principle". It sets the standard by which objects are deemed morally good or bad, and is the premise from which right, duty, and virtue are to be derived. It provides the most general predicate of moral judgement and the basic concept of moral knowledge".⁸³

Now, it is impossible to identify (1) with (2), or (3), such that to assert (1) is to cripple or make defunct either (2) or (3) or both; or to assert (1) or (2) or both is to go far far away from (1). The reasons why this is so is that both (2) and (3) are significant assertions, but (1) being analytic, is a non-significant assertion. To assert

(1) is logically to exclude both (2) and (3); and to assert (2) or (3) is logically to exclude (1). It is quite apparent that Perry is in utter confusion here.

It seems to me that Perry has been misled by his own formulation of the statement 'to be valuable is to be any object of any interest'. He is led to think that this statement is logically equivalent to the statement;

'Value or good=def. any object of any interest'.

He fails to see that the ordinary idiom of language allows for the equivalence of the following three expressions:-

- (a) to be valuable or good
- (b) to be something which is valuable or good
- (c) to be a value.

Now, the statement 'to be valuable is to be any object of any interest' is logically equivalent to any of the following statements;

- (d) to be something valuable is to be any object of any interest
- (e) to be a value is to be any object of any interest.

But, it is to misunderstand the logic of the expression 'to be valuable or good' if one thought, as Perry, for example, did, that 'to be valuable or good' is the same as 'good or valuable' or the same as the concept of good or valuable. It is this confusion of 'to be valuable or good' with 'good' or 'valuable' which has misled Perry into thinking that the statement 'to be valuable is to be any object of any interest' defined the concept of value or good. His enthusiasm

81) GTV, p 366, f.n. 82) GTV, Chapters XX, XXI, & XXII.

83) RV, p 119.

to define value as any object of any interest made Perry oblivious of the distinctions which, following Moore, he himself has so sharply drawn - the distinction between 'the good thing' and 'goodness' or the concept of good. The unfortunate result of this confusion has been that he takes the same statement 'to be valuable is to be any object of any interest' sometimes a statement of definition, sometimes a synthetic statement of the first principle of value theory, and sometimes to be a criterion of judging the value of things and actions. Clearly, (1) the statement 'to be any object of any interest is to be valuable' is different from (2) the statement 'to be any object of any interest is goodness', or from (3) the statement 'to be any object of any interest is valuable or goodness'. The statement (1) is an answer to the question, 'What does it mean for something to be judged to be good or valuable?' The statement (2) is an answer to a request for the meaning or definition of 'value' or 'good'. Finally, (3) is itself a value judgement, and it can be used as a criterion for judging things, persons, actions, practices, and institutions. Perry has confused (1) with (2) and (2) with (3) with the result that it is difficult to decide what the logical status of his most fundamental statement is.

I propose now to consider Perry's conception of the function and logical status of a value judgement. I begin with the function of a value judgement. Perry holds that a value judgement does not differ from other theoretical judgements formally, but that it differs from other theoretical judgements materially only. That is to say,

what makes a value judgement a value judgement is its subject-matter, its essential reference to interests and attitudes, and not its form. Formally, a value judgement strictly speaking is descriptive. In other words, the logical function of any value judgement is to describe and to do nothing else. A value judgement may move an individual emotionally, but this is only its accidental characteristic. What a value judgement describes is a state of affairs involving interests and attitudes.

Imagine that a value judgement is wholly descriptive. It implies that the predicate of a value judgement also is descriptive. This predicate must be some value term. Ask: Are value terms like 'good', 'valuable', 'bad', 'right', 'wrong' used for purposes of describing only? The answer clearly is; No. The function of value terms is not descriptive. If it were descriptive, then you cannot perform the job with them which they are ordinarily used to perform, the job of prescribing, commending, and the like. The point is that descriptive terms do not perform the function which ethical or value terms are used to perform. The same is true of descriptive sentences also. They cannot be used to perform the evaluative or ethical function of prescribing, commending, etc. It follows that when Perry reduces ethical or value judgements to descriptive statements, he prevents them from performing these functions. It seems to me that Perry in his enthusiasm to make value theory empirical and scientific fails to notice the peculiarity of value language, and he therefore, seeks to bring value theory

on par with any natural or social scientific theory. The unfortunate consequence of this attempt is that ethics becomes more or less a part of some such science as, for example, psychology. For, constructing a naturalistic value theory, I believe, it is not necessary, as Mill and Spencer, for examples, have shown, to reduce value or ethical discourse to descriptive discourse. To do this is to rob ethics or value theory of its autonomy.

Consider now Perry's thesis that value judgements have the same logical status with any other theoretical judgements, such that they are verifiable empirically, and hence can be said to have the usual truth values of truth and falsity. The model that Perry employs for the verification of value judgements is the perceptual model. He uses 'verification' in the alpha sense of 'verification' discussed by me in the third chapter; and 'truth' and 'falsity' also in the same sense. To say that a value judgement is verified to be true is to say that it corresponds with the relevant factual state of affairs; and to say that a value judgement is verified to be false is to say that it disagrees with the relevant state of affairs.

My first comment is that the perceptual model is not adequate for purposes of ethical verification. For, this model assumes that value or good is a matter of perception and that value predicates are names of empirically observable characteristics which are existent. This assumption is false for two reasons. One, that this assumption requires the identification of value predicates with factual predicates, an identification which leads us to understand the logic

of value expressions on the lines of the logic of factual expressions, with the result that we lose sight of the peculiar function of ethical or value language, the fact that value language is used to commend things, persons, institutions, or practices, and prescribe actions. And, two, the assumption goes against the basic principle of ethical theory that values are neutral with respect to facts, such that the same thing may have the value good or bad or indifferent under different set of conditions and contexts, depending upon the criteria used. Perry's theory violates this principle; for it asserts that value or goodness is as good an empirical characteristic as any other descriptive observable characteristics of things, e.g., yellowness.

Secondly, Perry employs the perceptual model of ethical verification because he misconceives the nature of ethical or value judgement. An ethical or value judgement, essentially, is a judgement for which reasons can be, and whenever they are asked for, are generally given. When a person makes an ethical judgement, he is required to give his reasons to justify that judgement of his. He is not required to report on his perceptions of goodness or value. This conception of ethical or value judgement is consonant with the ordinary, common-sense, conception of it. It states that truth and falsity of an ethical judgement is to be verified depending upon whether or not good reasons can be given for or against it. That is to say, the truth and falsity of an ethical judgement is verified on the justificatory model of verification, i.e., in the beta sense of 'verification' discussed by me in the third chapter of the present work.

This shows that the perceptual model of ethical verification is inadequate for purposes of ethical analysis.⁸⁴

Finally, it is not required, as Perry seems to have thought, that in order to make ethical or value theory scientific or empirical the ethicist must conceive the fundamental principle of his theory on the model of descriptive, factual statements and thus seek to employ the perceptual model for their verification and the verification of other ordinary judgements of value. He could very well have followed Herbert Spencer in accepting as the fundamental principle of his ethical theory the statement that whatever is an object of interest is good. This statement would then be the first principle of his value theory and itself strictly a value judgement. He could then regard this principle to be the criterion of value and derive from it in conjunction with some empirical statement or statements ordinary judgements of value. Also, he could formulate an intermediary principle stating that such and such characteristics make an object the object of interest. Thus, for judging the value of anything as good and bad he could use both the first principle that 'whatever is an object of interest is good' and the intermediary principle that such and such characteristics make an object the object of interest together. This way his value theory could be scientific and empirical without losing its autonomy. But, as Perry has conceived and structured his value theory, it not only demolishes the autonomy of value discourse but also reduces it to a descriptive discourse by making it a part of a natural or social science.

84) Perry modifies his position on the question of the verifiability of ethical judgement in 1954. See my discussion of his 1954 position, pp 164-172 of the present work.

I have tried to show in the foregoing that Perry adopts the perceptual model with respect to both the function and verification of ethical judgement in both of its form, specific ethical judgements and general ethical judgements or principles. This approach, the adoption of the perceptual model, has its repercussions on his theory of ethical reasoning also. We have already seen that he identified 'reasons' with 'causes'. The function of 'reasons' in the case of any disagreement in value matters is to resolve the disagreement. Resolution of value disagreements is the one effect that 'reasons' as causes function to achieve. The way value disagreements are resolved are by linking conflicting interests, creating new ones, by eliminating some, or by any other possible way which results in the resolution of the disagreement. The reasons work as psychological causes to resolve disagreement. They are made convincing not by their logical force, for they do not have any, but by their psychological force, by way of appeal to the interests of the disagreeing parties. That is to say, whenever there is a value disagreement, reasons become factors in persuading the disagreeing parties to come to an agreement. The point is that value disagreements are resolved not by logical argument but by psychological persuasion only.

Now, in such a theory of 'reasoning' no logic is involved. Value judgements are factual statements; reasons also are stated in terms of factual statements. The relation between value judgements and the reasons is strictly factual or psychological, not logical. The reasoner is going from

factual propositions to factual propositions which may not be related to each other by way of logic. The argument is 'valid' if it does the job, 'invalid', if it does not. In fact, the talk of validity and invalidity in the case of Perry's theory of 'reasoning' has no meaning.⁸⁵

It seems to me that I do not have much to say on Perry's theory of 'reasoning' in value matters. His talk strictly is psychological, not logical. It is of much use to salesmen, propagandists, politicians, but of no interest from the logical point of view.

To sum up:- I have dealt with Perry's definition of value, his theory of ethical or value judgement, and his theory of ethical verification. Regarding the first, I have tried to show that Perry is in utter confusion with regard to the logical status of his most fundamental statement 'to be valuable is to be any object of any interest'. Regarding the second, my thesis is that Perry's theory of ethical judgement robs ethics of its autonomy by denying its peculiarity in being prescriptive. Regarding the third, I have attempted to show that Perry adopts the perceptual model of ethical verification (he changed his position to the justificatory model in 1954), and that this model is absolutely inadequate to meeting the needs of ethical verification. Finally, I inserted a few remarks on Perry's theory of ethical reasoning and pointed out that it is more an empirical study in the cause-effect relations of resolving ethical disagreements rather than a logically oriented theory of ethical reasoning.

85) For a similar account of ethical reasoning, see Stevenson, C.L. Ethics and Language, Chapters VII, pp 152-173.

CHAPTER 7

DEWEY'S PRAGMATIC NATURALISM

I propose to discuss in the present chapter John Dewey's type of ethical naturalism. My objective in this study is not to decide on the question whether or not John Dewey is an ethical naturalist, but to inquire into the question whether or not it is a satisfactory naturalistic ethical theory from the methodological point of view. For my limited purposes, to show that he is an ethical naturalist it is enough to indicate that for him ethical judgement can be assigned the truth values of truth and falsity, because it is empirically verifiable and that factual reasons, or the propositions of science, can resolve any disagreement in value matters. In this study I will make special use of Dewey's Theory of Valuation (1939) and The Quest for Certainty (1929), though I shall also occasionally refer to some of his other writings.

This chapter is divided into two parts. In the first part, I have outlined Dewey's theory of value judgement and problems related to it, e.g., verifiability, and truth and falsity, and also his theory of reasoning in value matters with particular reference to value disagreements. In the second part, I present a critical examination of his theory of value judgement as well as that of value reasoning. I begin with his theory of value judgement.

Dewey's Theory of Ethical Judgement:-

Dewey distinguishes (a) a value judgement from a statement of matter of fact or factual statement. At the same time, he says that value judgements share many a characteristic with factual judgements specifically (b) verifiability by empirical means, and hence assignability of truth values. I will discuss these two parts of his theory separately.

(a) Value judgements are empirically verifiable, and hence they can be true or false. Dewey begins by noting the use of the words 'valuing' and 'valuation' in ordinary speech, and finds that the words are verbally employed

"to designate both prizing, in the sense of holding precious, dear (and various other nearly equivalent activities, like honouring, regarding highly), and appraising in the sense of putting a value upon, assigning value to".¹

In prizing, emphasis falls upon something having definite personal reference, which has an aspectual quality called emotional. In appraising, however, it being an activity of rating, an act of comparison is involved. In it the intellectual aspect is uppermost, the same general quality "that is found in 'estimate' as distinguished from the personal-emotional word 'esteem'".² Again,

"Wherever there is an appraisal involving a rule as to better or as to needed action, there is an end to be reached; the appraisal is a valuation of things with respect to their serviceability or needfulness".³

1) Dewey, John, Theory of Valuation, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press; 1939; p 5. In subsequent references, this work will be denoted 'TV'.

2) TV, p 5.

3) TV, p 23.

Having observed the use of the words 'valuing' and 'valuation' he looks for the designatum of the word 'valuation'. For, it is his thesis that it is "a futile task to assign signification to words in isolation from objects as designata".⁴ And, the job of the value theorist is to concern himself with "the existence and description of valuation".⁵ This inquiry of finding out the designatum of 'valuation' is forwarded by noting that

"the words 'caring', 'caring for' are, as modes of behaviour closely connected with 'liking', and that other substantially equivalent words are 'looking out for or after', 'cherishing', 'being devoted to', 'attending to', in the sense of 'tending', 'ministering to', 'fostering' - words that all seem to be variants of what is referred to by 'prizing'.⁶

As 'valuation' in one of its senses is the same as 'prizing', and as prizing is a behavioural attitude, the designatum of 'valuation' is the behavioural attitude of 'prizing' or 'caring for'. Thus, Dewey analyses 'valuation' in terms of the behavioural attitude of prizing or caring for. He excludes totally the affective element from his account of valuation; and explains things in terms of the conative only. Now, valuation in the sense of prizing and caring for involves desiring. He says;

"Because valuations in the sense of prizing and caring for occur only when it is necessary to bring something into existence which is lacking, or to conserve in existence something which is menaced by outside conditions, valuation involves desiring".⁷

But desire is a function of some given situation. It arises within a certain specifiable empirical context. The designata of desire are these situations, or as Dewey calls them, existential contexts. As these contexts of desire are

4) TV, p 14. 5) TV, p 15. 6) TV, p 14. 7) TV, p 15.

specifiable and empirically verifiable, for "the content and object of desires are seen to depend upon the particular context in which they arise, a matter that in turn depends upon the antecedent state of both personal activity and of surrounding conditions" and also "the effort, instead of being something that comes after desire, is seen to be of the very essence of the tension involved in desire",⁸ propositions which give information about valuation are possible. "When, however, desires are seen to arise only within certain existential contexts (namely, those in which some lack presents the immediate execution of an active tendency) and when they are seen to function in reference to these contexts in such a way as to make good the existing want, the relation between desire and valuation is found to be such as both to make possible and to require, statement in verifiable propositions".⁹ In other words, valuations can be stated in terms of verifiable propositions. The point which Dewey is driving at is that valuations as behavioural attitudes are factual occurrences; and the propositions which describe these occurrences are empirically verifiable propositions. They would be verifiable on the perceptual model of verification. He says:

"It follows that valuation in its connection with desire is linked to existential situations and that it differs with differences in its existential context. Since its existence depends upon the situation, its adequacy depends upon its adaptation to the needs and demands imposed by the situation. Since the situation is open to observation, and since the consequences of effort-behaviour as observed determine the adaptation, the adequacy of a given desire can be stated in propositions. The propositions are capable of empirical test because the connection that exists between a given desire and the conditions with reference to which it functions are ascertained by means of these observations".¹⁰

8) IV. p 16. 9) IV. p 16. 10) IV. pp 16-17.

This is Dewey's first step; propositions about valuations are possible. For, "desire and interests are activities which take place in the world and which have effects in the world, and as such they are observable in themselves and in connection with their observed effects".¹¹ As these phenomena are capable of being statable and describable in terms of empirically verifiable propositions, propositions about valuations are both possible and empirically verifiable.

Such propositions about valuations, however, are propositions about matters of fact. "They are valuation-propositions only in the sense in which propositions about potatoes are potatoe-propositions".¹² They are not valuation or value propositions in any distinctive sense. Even so it is necessary for Dewey's argument to show that such propositions about valuation are possible; for, if it is shown that such propositions about valuation are not possible, "it is doubly absurd to suppose that valuation-propositions in a distinctive sense can exist".¹³

To say that propositions about valuations are matters of fact propositions is to say that they are propositions about actual valuation occurrences. They do not take into account the conditions and consequences of actual observable valuational behaviour. When propositions about valuations are made in terms of their conditions and consequences, that is to say, when we have established valid general propositions about the observable valuational behaviour, then such propositions become valuation-propositions in a distinctive sense."¹⁴ Dewey writes;

11) IV, p 19. 12) IV, p 19. 13) IV, p 20. 20
14) IV, p 20.

"If this condition [i.e., propositions about valuations are made in terms of their conditions and consequences] is satisfied, then propositions about valuations that actually take place become the subject matter of valuations in a distinctive sense, that is, a sense that marks them off both from propositions of physics and from historical propositions about what human beings have in fact done".¹⁵

This is Dewey's second and final step in his argument.

Valuation propositions in a distinctive sense are possible. Such propositions are distinguished from propositions about valuations in that they are made in terms of their conditions and consequences and thus they are stated as valid general propositions about valutional behaviour. In a word, valuation propositions are valid empirical generalizations about valutional behaviour. It is obvious that being empirical generalizations based on the actual occurrences of observable valutional behaviour, such propositions are empirically verifiable, and can be said to be true or false in accordance with their agreement or disagreement with the facts concerned.

It is important at this stage to remind the reader that Dewey is using the expressions 'valuation' in both of its uses, as 'prizing' and as 'appraising', so that propositions expressing both prizing and appraising are value propositions. Propositions of prizing, desiring, etc. are different from propositions of appraising, the latter being value propositions in a distinctive sense. These value propositions are said to be true or false because of their empirical verifiability. Now, Dewey claims that distinctively valuation propositions "describe and define certain things as good, fit, or proper in a definite existential relation and that this existential relation is that of means-ends or means-consequences".¹⁶

In other words, what these distinctively valuation propositions state is that such and such means lead to such and such ends or consequences. Be it noted that these propositions do not say that such and such conduct is good, or that such and such conduct is bad; they do not define the end. What they do is only to state that such and such actions will give rise to such and such consequences, or that such and such actions will enable one to realize such and such objects which are regarded as ends. They, clearly, do not say anything on the question whether or not the consequences of such and such actions are good; or whether or not the object achieved as a result of such and such action is good or is an end. They only state the relation between certain actions and their verifiable consequences, or between certain means and the ends which they enable us to realize. Thus Dewey says:-

"There is always some observation of the outcome attained in comparison and contrast with that intended, such that the comparison throws light upon the actual fitness of the things employed as means. It thus makes possible a better judgement in the future as to their fitness and usefulness. On the basis of such observations certain modes of conduct are adjudged silly, imprudent, or unwise, and other modes of conduct sensible, prudent, or wise, the discrimination being made upon the basis of the validity of the estimates reached about the relation of things as means to the end or consequences actually reached".¹⁷

Hence, he concludes: "these i.e., distinctively valuation propositions in their generalized form may rest upon scientifically warranted empirical propositions and are

15) TV, p 20. 16) TV, p 24. 17) TV, p 23.

themselves capable of being tested by observation of results actually attained as compared with those intended".¹⁸

To sum up: Valuation propositions are of two types; those which are about actual valuation occurrences and those which are made in terms of their conditions and consequences. The latter are considered by Dewey as distinctively valuation propositions. Both types, however, are empirically verifiable, and hence can be true or false. In the case of both these types, verification is defined on the perceptual model; that is to say, propositions of both these types are to be verified to be true or false by the aid of empirical observation of actual valuational behaviour. As prizing is connected with ends, and appraising is connected with means, we may also call valuation propositions judgements of ends, and evaluative propositions judgements of means.

So far, I have tried to state briefly Dewey's conception of valuation or prizing propositions and shown that they are propositions about the actual valuational behaviour. Also, I have tried to present his conception of evaluative or appraising propositions, and said that they are empirical generalizations based on the actual valuational behaviour and that they state the existential relation of means to consequences or ends. With regard to the means-consequences or means-ends empirical generalizations, Dewey now adds that, besides being empirical generalizations about the means-

18) IV, p 24.

consequences relation, these evaluative or appraising propositions are some sort of 'rules' or 'conditions' which regulate our conduct when we want to determine which means will lead to which results or consequences. As an example of an elementary appraisal proposition, he offers "This plot of ground is worth 200 dollars a front foot". This proposition is different in form from the proposition, "It has a frontage of 200 feet". The latter proposition states a matter of accomplished fact. The proposition "This plot of ground is worth 200 dollars a front foot" states "a rule for determination of an act to be performed, its reference being to the future and not to something already accomplished or done. If stated in the context in which a tax-assessor operates, it states a regulative condition for levying a tax against the owner".¹⁹

Moreover,

"The future act of state is not set forth as a prediction of what will happen but as something which shall or should happen. Thus the proposition may be said to lay down a norm, but 'norm' must be understood simply in the sense of a condition to be conformed to in definite forms of future action. That rules are all but omnipresent in every mode of human relationship is too obvious to require argument. They are in no way confined to activities to which the name 'moral' is applied. Every recurrent form of activity, in the arts and professions, develops rules as to the best way in which to accomplish the ends in view. Such rules are used as criteria or 'norms' for judging the value of proposed modes of behaviour."²⁰

It is apparent that appraisal propositions are so many different things at the same time. They are undoubtedly empirical generalizations. Also, they are rules or regulative conditions whose reference is to the future action, not to something already accomplished or done. They are not predictions strictly; for they do not say what will happen,

but only what shall or should happen. Finally, they are norms in the sense of being conditions to be conformed to in definite forms of future action. Whatever that be, the problem which Dewey seeks to deal with is not the problem of "their existence as general propositions (since every rule of action is general)", but it is the problem whether or not such rules "are capable of stating relation between things as means and other things as consequences, which relations are themselves grounded in empirically ascertained and tested existential relations such as are usually termed those of cause and effect."²¹

Notwithstanding all this, Dewey seems to be saying that appraisal propositions are not wholly identical with ordinary empirical generalizations. They differ in form from the scientific propositions upon which they rest. And, this difference consists in the fact that appraisal propositions are rules for the use of scientific generalizations as means for accomplishing certain desired and intended ends. He says:

"Appraisals of courses of action as better and worse, more and less serviceable, are as experimentally justified as are non-evaluative propositions about impersonal subject matter ... Nevertheless, propositions which lay down rules for procedures as being fit and good, as distinct from those that are inept and bad, are different in form from the scientific propositions upon which they rest. For they are rules for the use, in and by human activity, of scientific generalizations as means for accomplishing certain desired and intended ends."²²

That is to say, appraisal propositions are different from ordinary scientific generalizations in that they are used as rules for, or regulative conditions of, guiding conduct with respect to the ends intended to be realized.

19) IV, pp 20-21. 20) IV, p 21. 21) IV, p 21.
22) IV, pp 22-23.

Relation between appraisal propositions and prizing propositions:-

I will now try to outline Dewey's conception of the relation between appraisal propositions and prizing propositions, both called by him to be valuation propositions, the former being valuation propositions in a distinctive sense. This is the first point of difference; Prizing propositions are propositions about matters of fact; while appraisal propositions are made in terms of the conditions and consequences of valuational behaviour; and it is this fact which makes them valuation propositions in a distinctive sense.

A second point of difference is that appraisal propositions do, and prizing propositions do not, state the existential relation of means-consequences or means-ends. And, it is this fact about appraisals propositions which makes them empirical generalizations arrived at on the basis of valuation propositions in a non-distinctive sense.

Both sorts of propositions, nevertheless, are empirically verifiable, and can be said to be true or false, of course on the perceptual model of verification for truth and falsity.

Apart from these points of similarity and dissimilarity between the two sorts of propositions, from Dewey's point of view, the most important relation between them is that, as appraisals enter necessarily into strengthening, modifying, eliminating, and instituting our prizing attitudes to things, appraisal propositions are necessarily put forth in justifications of any prizing propositions. Dewey does not appear to have talked of the logical relationship

between prizing propositions and appraisal propositions in detail anywhere in his writings. What he has been most concerned with is the relation of means to ends or that of means to consequences, both of which relations are identical as far as Dewey's thesis goes. I will, therefore, try to develop this point that appraisal propositions are cited as reasons for or against prizing propositions. I am not concerned here with the question whether or not such reasons are sufficient to justify any proposition of prizing. What I am concerned with is Dewey's thesis that whenever we have a judgement of prizing, we do deliberate about what means we require to realize that which we prize, and that this deliberation consists in putting forth propositions of appraisals of the means which will lead to the realization of the end in question. Suppose, for example, that I prize E. (1) "E is an end" or (1) "E is prized by me" is a prizing proposition. Now, if I asserted this prizing proposition, I am also required to cite an appraisal proposition, or a set of appraisal propositions, which should state that what I prize is realizable, that is to say, there are humanly possible means to realize E. Let (2) "M is a means to E" be an appraisal proposition which must be asserted if E is to be realized. If (2) is asserted in conjunction with (1), then (1) is said to be justified; but if (1) is asserted without (2), then (1) is said to be not justified. It is also likely that an appraisal proposition, or a set of appraisal propositions, may show that the end to be realized is not worth the effort. Dewey says:-

"ends are appraised in the same evaluation in which things as means are weighed. For example, an end suggests itself. But, when things are weighed as means toward that end, it is found that it will take too much time or too great an expenditure of energy to achieve it, or that, if it were attained, it would bring with it certain accompanying inconveniences and the promise of future troubles. It is then appraised and rejected as a "bad" end".²³

He substantiates the assertion that deliberation consists of appraisal propositions as follows:-

"A survey of what takes place in any deliberate activity provides an affirmative answer to this question viz., 'Do appraisals effect prizings?' . For what is deliberation except weighing of various alternative desires (and hence end-values) in terms of the conditions that are the means of their execution, and which as means determine the consequences actually arrived at? There can be no control of the operation of foreseeing consequences (and hence of forming ends-in-view) save in terms of conditions that operate as the causal conditions of their attainment. The propositions in which any object adopted as an end-in-view is statable (or explicitly stated) is warranted in just the degree to which existing conditions have been surveyed and appraised in their capacity as means. The sole alternative to this statement is that no deliberation whatsoever occurs, no ends-in-view are formed, but a person acts directly upon whatever impulse happens to present itself".²⁴

The general form of the argument in justification of any prizing proposition will be as follows:-

(A) E is prized,

Because: (1) E has such and such consequences; and

(2) E is realizable under such and such conditions.

Or, (B) (1) E leads to consequences c_1, c_2, \dots, c_m ; and

(2) E is realizable under conditions C_1, C_2, \dots, C_m .

(3) Therefore, E is prized, or is an end, or is good.

This is what seems to my mind the meaning of Dewey's assertion that appraisal propositions enter necessarily into the justification of any prizing proposition.

Dewey's Theory of Value-Disagreement:-

We have seen that value judgements, according to Dewey's analysis, are either factual assertions, as in the case of value propositions of prizing; or at best, empirical generalizations, as in the case of value propositions of appraisings. In both the cases, they remain empirically verifiable assertions, such that they can be said to be true or false depending upon their agreement or disagreement with facts of observable valuational behaviour. It follows that whenever there is a disagreement in value matters, that disagreement is of the same logical order as any disagreement about factual matters, such that all value disagreements must be said to be decidable on the basis of facts of observation.

Also, Dewey holds that standards of value, or principles, or rules of value have two logical properties; (1) they are testable hypotheses which are subject to alternation; and therefore, two (2) they are not final. Now, given any disagreement with respect to value standards or principles or rules, one is always ready to put these principles to the test of empirical verification. If the facts of observable valuational behaviour verify one of the two conflicting principles, the principle so verified is accepted to be true and the principle falsified is rejected by the contending parties. The point is that any disagreement in

value matters is decidable wholly by observation of valational behaviour.

To sum up:- According to Dewey, valuations are observable human behaviour. Therefore, propositions about valuation behaviour are possible. Such propositions are empirically verifiable, and they can be said to be true or false. Such propositions consist of the set of prizing propositions. There is another set of propositions, propositions of appraisal of means to ends or means to consequences, which propositions are valuation propositions in a distinctive sense. These propositions, being empirical generalizations, are verifiable, and they can be said to be true and false, on the perceptual model of verification, truth and falsity. The function of these propositions is to serve as rules for guiding valational behaviour, or as norms or criteria for judging behaviour as good or bad.

Dewey has not said much on the logical relation between prizing propositions and appraisal propositions. Yet, when we try to define this relationship, it turns out to be the relation of justification. That is to say, it turns out to be the case that appraisal propositions are cited as reasons in justification of prizing propositions.

Dewey's theory of value-disagreement follows from his conception of the logical status of value propositions of both prizing and appraisal types. As both prizing and appraisal propositions are empirically verifiable by observation of human valational behaviour, value-disagreements

are wholly decidable on the basis of facts, that is to say, by purely scientific, empirical, descriptive assertions of matters of fact.

In what follows I shall offer some critical remarks of his theory of value in its various aspects as discussed above.

Let me, first of all, make an attempt to give coherence to Dewey's theory of valuation by asking one of the most fundamental questions for any value theory: 'What, according to the theory in question, is the criterion of value?' I say, an answer to this question will give coherence to Dewey's theory of value. I say this for two different reasons: One, (this is methodological), if I can locate Dewey's criterion of value then I can reconstruct his value theory, particularly, his theories of reasoning and justification in value matters; because on these topics, when I read Dewey I do not get a full-length discussion, and his remarks on them at their best are sketchy. Two, (this is a reason of criticism), it seems to me that Dewey has assumed a criterion of value throughout his value theory, but nowhere has he formulated or stated it explicitly. The result of this has been that it becomes impossible to be convinced of how appraisal propositions, which on Dewey's theory are no more than valid empirical generalizations, stating only the existential relation between means and ends or means and consequences, can function as rules or principles for guiding conduct, or as criterion of value, of good and bad conduct.

Where can we locate the criterion of value? The most natural place for locating it would be the prizing propositions or judgements of ends. This suggestion, however, must be rejected. In the first place, these propositions of prizing are descriptive, factual, propositions which are descriptive of actual observable valuational behaviour. And, therefore, they are not value propositions in a distinctive sense. In the second place, prizing propositions themselves are rejected and accepted on the strength of propositions of another sort, called appraisal propositions or judgements of means. Hence, for these two reasons we cannot assert that it is the judgements of ends or the prizing propositions which are or can be the criteria of value.

The only other possible place for locating the criterion of value is appraisal propositions or the judgements of means. It may look preposterous on my part to suggest this possibility that propositions of appraisal could be the criteria of value; but let us consider this possibility seriously. There are reasons for this. The most important reason being Dewey's own assertion that it is these appraisal propositions which function as rules or principles for guiding conduct, ~~as~~ as criteria of good and bad conduct.

Now, can these appraisal propositions serve as criteria of value? On the face of it, it would seem that they cannot. They cannot function as criteria of value, for the simple reason that, although Dewey says that they do, they are empirical generalizations. They only formulate and state the generalized relation between what things will have what consequences. They only state a conjunction of

two things: One that such and such result is realizable or producible under such and such conditions, and two that such and such consequences follow upon the production of the result. That is to say, they state the relation of means to consequences in terms of the conditions and consequences of our valuational behaviour. Clearly, as empirical generalizations stating only the relation between means and consequences, these propositions of appraisal are not value propositions. Far less can they be said to be the criteria of value.

Yet, Devey says that propositions of appraisal are value propositions in a distinctive sense. Does he give any reasons for this claim? In his main ethical writings, I have not found any stated anywhere explicitly. However, he does show at a few places the manner in which appraisal propositions necessarily enter into our appraisal of ends. I will quote an example given by him:

"ends are appraised in the same evaluation in which things as means are weighed. For example, an end suggests itself. But, what things are weighed as means toward that end, it is found that it will take too much time or too great an expenditure of energy to achieve it, or that, if it were attained, it would bring with it certain accompanying inconveniences and the promise of future trouble. ²⁵ It is then appraised and rejected as a "bad" end".

That is to say, an end suggests itself. It is accepted as an end prima facie. Then, it is appraised in terms of its costs and consequences. Then, if both its costs and consequences are acceptable, the end is declared to be acceptable as an end. Consider a concrete example; John desires X. The fact

25) IV, p 24.

that John desires x sets in a process of deliberation on the question whether or not x can be taken to be an end. This deliberation consists in formulating and stating appraisal propositions made in terms of the conditions, costs and consequences of x . If the deliberation or appraisal reveals that the costs and consequences of doing or producing x are acceptable, then x is declared to be acceptable or desirable as an end. Remember that the fact of John's desiring x does not by itself make x desirable or an end. What makes x desirable or an end is its appraisal in terms of its costs and consequences. I will elucidate the phrase "appraisal in terms of cost and consequences" presently. This phrase looks to be innocently value-neutral; but in fact it is not. For, appraisal in terms of costs and consequences is not merely a factual statement, indicating that x involves so much cost and such and such consequences. If it were a factual statement, it could not give us a criterion to decide the desirability of x in respect of costs and consequences about which we have so much bothered to deliberate. But, it is asserted to give us a criterion of decidability of the value of x . It gives us a criterion of decidability of value only because this phrase "appraisal in terms of costs and consequences" involves a conjunction of two statements: One that x has so much costs and such and such consequences, and two that these costs and consequences themselves are desirable and acceptable. Without the second conjunct, any appraisal propositions could not serve as criteria of judging the value of x as desirable or an end.

The point that I am driving at is that Dewey's appraisal propositions are not mere empirical generalizations. They function as the criteria of the value only because the value criterion in them is hidden from the view. Any appraisal proposition, in fact, is equivalent to a conjunction of the following two propositions:-

(a) x involves these costs (or conditions) and consequences; and

(b) These costs (or conditions) and consequences are themselves acceptable or desirable as end.

Dewey seems to give the impression that appraisal propositions are only generalized statements of the conditions and consequences of any suggested end. But, if this were the case, appraisal propositions could not be value propositions at all, far less value propositions in a distinctive sense. What makes them value propositions or value propositions in a distinctive sense is the conjunct (b), which Dewey does not seem to make explicit. And, it is when we have a conjunction of both (a) and (b) that we can use appraisal propositions as criteria of determining the value of anything.

Let me construct a fully-dressed-up argument showing how we decide the value of any suggested or prima facie end. The argument will take the following form; The question to be decided is whether or not x has value for John, or 'is x desirable or an end?'

(1) John desires x

(2) x is realizable under conditions C_1, C_2, \dots, C_m

(3) x has consequences c_1, c_2, \dots, c_m

(4) Both the conditions and consequences (as defined in

(2) and (3) above) are desirable or acceptable

(5) Therefore, x is desirable or acceptable as an end. (1) is a suggested or prima facie end, (2) an appraisal proposition, (3) another appraisal proposition, (4) the criterion of value, and (5) the decision of value.

Dewey does not specify what kinds of conditions and consequences would be termed desirable or acceptable. I suppose that he would accept some sort of utilitarian criterion. Without specifying the kinds of conditions and consequences which make a thing desirable, I propose to formulate Dewey's criterion of value as follows:

If the conditions and consequences (an analysis of which has been scientifically arrived at) of something or some action are desirable or acceptable, then that thing or action is good or desirable or acceptable as an end.

I will henceforth call this the first or the most fundamental principle of Dewey's theory of value. And, my claim is that without this fundamental principle it is impossible to give coherence to Dewey's theory of value. By way of reasons to substantiate this claim I will now attempt to show how without it I am at a loss to understand Dewey and how with it I can give an intelligible organisation to his theory. I will later show that, when this fundamental principle of his theory is made explicit, both his theory of ethical judgement and ethical verification on the perceptual model can be wholly challenged.

Consider the problem of decidability of value when there is disagreement, for instance, between two persons, John and Smith. The question to be answered is whether or

not x is desirable. John says that x is desirable; while Smith contradicting John's statement, says that x is not desirable. How does Dewey propose to resolve this disagreement on the value of x ? His advice would be: Investigate into the conditions and consequences of x . Well, we answer, we have done that already. We have found that (1) x is realizable under conditions C_1, C_2, \dots, C_m and also that (2) x has consequences c_1, c_2, \dots, c_m . Now, the mere fact of the conjunction of (1) and (2) alone is not sufficient to decide the value of x . For, when John says that x is desirable, he gives as his reasons for his judgement that, though it is true that (1) x is realizable under conditions C_1, C_2, \dots, C_m and also that (2) x has consequences c_1, c_2, \dots, c_m , not all but some only, say, consequences c_3, c_4 , and c_5 of x are desirable, and it is these consequences that make x desirable. Smith, on the contrary, while agreeing so far as the value-neutral (1) and (2) statements are concerned, denies that x is desirable because the consequences c_3, c_4 , and c_5 are not desirable. The point is that even though both John and Smith may agree on (1) and (2), they may disagree on the question of the value of x . The reason for this disagreement is that, so far as facts are concerned, they are neutral with respect to value. For, the same fact may be assigned different values under different conditions from different points of view. And, the disagreement cannot be resolved, unless you specified the point of view from which you are considering the question of value. For, it is only when you have specified your value point of view that you can relate certain value neutral factual statement, in our example the statements

(1) and (2), as reasons for your value judgement; without specifying your point of view, the descriptive, factual, statements remain indifferent, neutral to your ethical judgement. That is to say, the same set of factual statements can be cited as reasons for or against any value judgement. My point is that only a conjunction of (1) and (2) alone is not sufficient, though it must be cited, to resolve the disagreement on the question of the value of x . In order to be able to resolve the disagreement you must add (3) in conjunction with (1) and (2), namely, that both the conditions and the consequences (as specified) are themselves desirable. And, this (3) must be accepted or subscribed to by both John and Smith. It is then and then only that disagreement on the value of x could be rationally resolved.

I hope that by this discussion I have shown how important and necessary it is for any value theory to have a first principle of value which spells out the specific value point of view. Such a fundamental principle functions to relate or connect as reasons or assimilate certain value neutral factual statements to the class of reasons for or against any value judgement. Given the fundamental value principle and the ordinary rules of logic, reasons for any ethical judgement are provided, the structure of ethical justification exhibited, and any questions of disagreement on the value of any thing or any action decided within the ethical framework of the fundamental principle of any given theory of value.

In this section and the next I propose to deal with two questions: One, 'Does Dewey's theory of value commit what Moore calls the naturalistic fallacy?' and two, 'Does he logically derive 'ought' or value judgement from 'is' or factual statements?' Both the questions are interconnected. However, let us consider the first question first.

Dewey nowhere defines value in terms of desire, or interest, as Perry, for example, does. He, however, does connect desire to value, but does not equate the two. Rather, he is at great pains to reject the thesis that there is no distinction between desire and value. He says in criticism of the empirical theories of value, for instance, Perry's theory of value, that they seek to escape from the defects of transcendental absolutism by setting up as values enjoyments; but this escape

"is not to be had by setting up as values enjoyments that happen anyhow, but indefining value by enjoyments which are the consequences of intelligent action. Without the intervention of thought, enjoyments are not values but problematic goods, becoming values when they reissue in a changed form from intelligent behaviour. The fundamental trouble with the current empirical theory of values is that it merely formulates and justifies the socially prevailing habit of regarding enjoyments as they are actually experienced as values in and of themselves. It completely sidesteps the question of regulation of these enjoyments". 26

Dewey recommends the operational approach to the problem of defining value. The operational approach requires us "that we regard our direct and original experience of things liked and enjoyed as only possibilities of values to be

26) Dewey, John, The Quest for Certainty, New York, Minton, Balch & Company, 1929; p 259. In subsequent references, the work will be denoted 'QC'.

achieved; that enjoyment becomes a value when we discover the relation upon which its presence depends. Such causal and operational definition gives only a conception of a value, not a value itself. But the utilization of the conception in action results in an object having secure and significant value".²⁷

Having criticised empirical theories of value and also specified his approach to the question of defining value, Dewey differentiates between the enjoyed and the enjoyable, the desired and the desirable, the satisfying and the satisfactory. "To say that something is enjoyed is to make a statement about a fact, something already in existence; it is not to judge the value of that fact. There is no difference between such a proposition and one which says that something is sweet or sour, red or black. It is just correct or incorrect and that is the end of the matter. But to call an object a value is to assert that it satisfied or fulfills certain conditions. Function and status in meeting conditions is a different matter from bare existence. The fact that something is desired only raises the question of its desirability; it does not settle it".²⁸

The same is true of the distinction between 'satisfying' and 'satisfactory'. To say that something satisfies is to report something as an isolated finality. To assert that it is satisfactory is to define it in its connections and

27) QC, p 259.

28) QC, p 260.

and interconnections".²⁹ Dewey goes on;

"find satisfaction in a thing may be a warning, a summons to be on the look out for consequences. To declare something satisfactory is to assert that it meets specifiable conditions ... That it is satisfying is the content of a proposition of fact; that it is satisfactory is a judgement, an estimate, an appraisal. It denotes an attitude to be taken, that of striving to perpetuate and to make secure".³⁰

Thus, the substance of Dewey's thesis regarding the definition of value is this: To say that something is a value or is valuable or good is to say that (1) that thing is realizable under conditions C_1, C_2, \dots, C_m and also (2) that it has consequences c_1, c_2, \dots, c_m . That is to say, to assert that something is a value is to assert a conjunction of both (1) and (2). I want to say now that this is not a definition of the concept of value. If the concept of value or goodness is distinguished from a value or a valuable thing or a good thing, then what Dewey is talking of is about the valuable thing or a value, not about the concept of value. This is my first point.

My second point is that even if this definition is regarded as a definition of the valuable thing, the definition is incomplete. For, it only says that such and such a thing is realizable under such and such conditions and that it has such and such consequences. And, we know that to say that something has certain conditions and certain consequences is not to say that it is valuable. My point is that while it is true that all things which are valuable have certain

30) QC, pp 260-61.

conditions and certain consequences, the converse is not true that all things which have those conditions and consequences are valuable or good. What is lacking in Dewey's definition of the valuable thing is that he does not say that these conditions and the consequences of the thing which is judged to be good or valuable are themselves valuable or good. To put it differently, in his definition of the valuable thing, Dewey must assert a conjunction of three statements; (1) the thing (which is judged to be valuable) has such and such conditions and costs, (2) it has such and such consequences, and (3) the costs, conditions, and the consequences themselves are valuable or good. In other words, he must assert what I have called the most fundamental principle of his theory of value; he has implicitly assumed it.

Now, if he does not do this, that is, make the third conjunct a part of his definition of the valuable thing, he does in effect commit the naturalistic fallacy by identifying the concept of goodness or value with the naturalistic characteristic of 'having certain conditions and certain consequences'. For, the valuable thing, on his definition, is nothing but the thing having certain conditions and certain consequences. In other words, the differentia of any valuable thing is the natural characteristics of 'having certain conditions and certain consequences'. That is to say, 'value' = df. 'having certain conditions and certain consequences'. Clearly, to define the concept of value in terms of the natural characteristic of having certain conditions and certain consequences is to identify

value with the natural characteristics. Hence, I am led to conclude that Dewey has committed the naturalistic fallacy. He can avoid this fallacy only by making explicit the implicitly assumed fundamental principle of his theory of value.

Consider the question, 'Does Dewey logically derive a value judgement from a factual statement, or a set of such statements?' Earlier I have tried to show that Dewey talks of two types of valuation propositions, those of the prizing type and the appraising type. Both of these types of propositions are empirical assertions which are wholly verifiable by other empirical assertions. The difference between the two types of propositions is spelled out by him as consisting in the fact that the prizing propositions are propositions about matters of fact, and appraisal propositions are valid empirical generalizations. It is this 'generalization' character of the appraisal propositions that makes them or qualifies them to be valuation propositions 'in a distinctive sense'. For my purposes, both a specific statement of fact and a generalized statement of fact are equally descriptive, factual, empirical, propositions.

Now, as factual propositions, in no sense can they be classified as valuation or value propositions. And, when Dewey asserts that the propositions of appraisal type are generalized statements based on the prizing type, he is going from factual propositions to factual propositions, the logical relation between the two being that of induction. Hence, there is no question of illicitly inferring value propositions from factual propositions; for we are going

from factual to factual, not from factual to value propositions.

Now if you look at the content of appraisal propositions, these appraisal propositions do not say more than that such and such actions or things are producible under such and such conditions and that they have such and such costs and consequences. They state the existential relation between means and their consequences. They as such, therefore, cannot belong to the class of value propositions. Hence, again, there is no illicit passage from factual to value propositions.

As an alternative let us grant that Dewey's appraisal type of propositions are valuation propositions or value propositions. On his own thesis, these appraisal propositions are empirical generalizations based on the propositions of prizing type which are pure and simple factual propositions. If this is granted, then he seems to be envisaging some sort of inductive relation between factual and value propositions. Let us admit that the relation is inductive. This relation can at best enable Dewey to make an empirical generalization, not a value judgement. It can, at best, say that such and such action or means has such and such conditions and consequences, but in no intelligible way can it assert that these conditions and consequences are themselves desirable or valuable, an assertion which he cannot avoid requiring if he is to be able to use the appraisal propositions for purposes of guiding conduct. The point

I am making is that if the relation between the pricing propositions and appraisal propositions is envisaged as that of inductive generalization, what you get as the result of consequence of this thesis is a factual proposition and not a value proposition. The inductive relation cannot enable him to arrive at a value proposition from a set of factual propositions.

Dewey has to show that x is desirable. " x is desirable" is a value proposition. Whatever his reasons for it may be, the reasoning will have the following pattern;

- (1) x is realizable under such and such conditions and it has such and such consequences,
- (2) Therefore, x is desirable.

Elsewhere, I have said that Dewey makes no distinction between (1) and (2). I am now considering the case where he may make the distinction; though I do not know how he can. Well, he can deductively go from (1) to (2) only by identifying 'desirable', which is an ethical predicate with 'having certain conditions and consequences', which is a naturalistic, factual, predicate, or by defining the one in terms of the other. Whichever of the two alternatives he may adopt, he must commit the naturalistic fallacy.

Dewey, however, does not have to logically derive a value judgement from factual statements, only if he clearly recognizes and makes it explicit the implicitly assumed fundamental principle of his value theory. This principle itself must be a value judgement. It serves as the major premiss in any ethical argument, and relates or connects factual statements or generalizations with the ethical

judgement for which they function as reasons. Then, the pattern of reasoning will be the familiar syllogistic pattern;

- (1) x is realizable under such and such conditions and it has such and such costs and consequences,
- (2) These conditions and costs and consequences are themselves desirable or good,
- (3) Therefore, x is desirable or good.

In such a pattern of ethical reasoning, the logical relation between premisses and conclusion will be the logical relation of analyticity.

I have so far not attempted to show how the fundamental principle of his theory, the principle which essentially, is pragmatic or utilitarian, is implicitly assumed by him. My reasons for making this claim have been given earlier. In this section I give the relevant evidence which goes to exhibit the assumption of this pragmatic or utilitarian value principle;

In the first place, (to sum up the reasons already given), ambiguities of expression and structural and functional chaos of his theory of value cannot be explained unless the fundamental principle of his value theory is clearly recognized and made explicit.

In the second place, recording his conclusions, he writes that appraisal propositions

"are propositions which are not merely about valuations that have actually occurred [about, i.e., prizings, desires, and interests that have taken place in the past] but which describe and define certain things as good, fit, or proper in a definite existential relation. These propositions, moreover,

are generalizations, since they form rules for the proper use of materials".³¹

Again, the word 'value', he says, is used to

"designate whatever is taken to have rightful authority in the direction of conduct".³²

Further,

"Values (to sum up) may be connected with liking, and not with every liking but only with those that judgement has approved, after examination of the relation upon which the object liked depends".³³

Apart from these, there are many other expressions which clearly show that Dewey has assumed the fundamental principle, but has not clearly recognized and explicitly formulated it.

It is not necessary for making value theory amenable to scientific treatment that value judgement must be reduced to, structured on the pattern of, or interpreted in terms of some judgement verifiable on the perceptual model. The naturalist who seeks to make ethics or value theory empirical has, on the lines of Herbert Spencer, only to show that statements which formulate and state the means-consequence relations are empirical generalizations arrived at scientifically. Mill called such statements intermediary principles. Dewey's appraisal propositions as empirical generalizations are such intermediary principles, though Dewey does not appear to have given them any specific content. What the naturalist of Dewey's variety has to bear in mind is that the intermediary principles themselves alone, or in isolation of the fundamental ethical principle, are not value judgements; they remain pure and simple empirical generalizations unless they are conjoined with the latter.

31) IV, p 24. 32) QC, p 256. 33) QC, p 264.

To sum up: In this chapter I have, first, discussed Dewey's theory of value judgement and remarked that he conceives the logical status of value judgements on the perceptual model. The perceptual model, however, is inadequate for the purpose of analysis of value judgements. Then, I attempted to show that Dewey must commit the naturalistic fallacy, unless we accept that he has implicitly assumed (which in fact he seems to have done) the fundamental principle of value theory, conceived on the lines of the utilitarian principle. This principle must itself be a value judgement. Finally, I discussed the implications of clearly recognizing and explicitly stating the above principle.

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C O N C L U S I O N S

Ethical naturalism has, more frequently, been described as that type of ethical theory which answers the question, 'Can ethical expressions be analysed in terms of factual expressions?' in the affirmative. I have called this view Ethical Naturalism *a la* Moore. I have discussed it in the first chapter with special reference to Moore's naturalistic fallacy argument.

In the second chapter, I have concentrated on the issue of the logical relation between factual statements and ethical judgements, and considered that form of ethical naturalism which is said to deduce ethical judgements from factual statements. I have shown that it is logically impossible to derive an ethical judgement from a set of factual statements, and that ethical naturalism is untenable if it asserts that such a derivation is possible. In the course of my discussion, I have examined two very sophisticated positions - those of Stephen Toulmin and Kurt Baier - which claim that it is possible to deduce ethical judgements from factual statements. I have shown that the logical structures built by these two philosophers fail to deliver the goods, and that in their failure, they show up a peculiarity of ethical reasoning, namely, that it operates within the framework of certain ethical principles.

I have examined in the third chapter that form of ethical naturalism which is said to assimilate ethical

judgements to factual statements. I have maintained that this form of ethical naturalism cannot satisfactorily account for the semantic peculiarity, namely, the action-guiding function, of ethical expressions. In the course of my discussion, I have considered two recent positions on the issue - those of Phillip Blair Rice and Abraham Edel - and shown that neither of the two positions can be maintained successfully.

It has been a part of my thesis to show that the above three forms of ethical naturalism follow upon Moore's model of ethical naturalism, and are logically interrelated.

Not all so-called naturalistic ethical theories, however, can be comprehended under Moore's model. Many ethical theories which Moore characterized as naturalistic, on critical examination, are found to fall outside of Moore's model. I have also found by my analysis of the ethical theories of Mill, Spencer, Perry, and Dewey (chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7 respectively) that Moore's model of ethical naturalism tends to make ethics impossible.

My findings suggest two alternatives: (1) either to give up the expression 'ethical naturalism' as inadequate and misleading for purposes of describing those ethical theories which are empirically biased, and in particular, to give up Moore's model of ethical naturalism as an unsatisfactory model, or else (2) to treat his model (in its three forms), at best, to be a species of ethical naturalism and to describe naturalism in a way in which it

is in conformity with the actual practice of naturalists. I have accepted the second alternative. As the result of a study of Mill, Spencer, Perry, and Dewey, I have arrived at a new model of ethical naturalism. Its main features are as follows:-

(1) A naturalistic ethical theory, in order to make ethical judgements empirically verifiable, does not require that ethical judgements must be analysed and verified on the observational model on which factual statements are analysed and verified.

(2) It can make the logical distinction between ethical expressions and factual expressions and assert that:

- (a) ethical judgement is action-guiding,
- (b) it is empirically verifiable in the sense that factual statements in conjunction with some relevant ethical principle can be cited as evidence for it,
- (c) the usual truth-values can be assigned to it,
- (d) within the frame-work of the most fundamental principles of a naturalistic ethical theory, ethical reasoning follows the deductive style,
- (e) the most fundamental principles of a naturalistic ethical theory may be accepted, by decision, to be true, but within the logical structure of the theory they can be neither proved nor disproved,
- (f) any naturalistic ethical theory may be made rigorously empirical by accepting some

intermediary principle arrived at by the methods of science and related to the most fundamental principle of the theory, such that it may be used as an immediate criterion for passing ethical judgement.

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